University of Alberta

COUNSELLORS' EXPERIENCES OF CROSS-CULTURAL SOJOURNING

by

Christine Alison Wihak ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Psychological Studies in Education

Department of Educational Psychology

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall, 2004

Library and
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-612-96041-2
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 0-612-96041-2

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing the Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou aturement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

DEDICATION

To my beloved meditation teacher, Namgyal Rinpoche, who inspired my own journey to the North.

To Carmen Levi and Mark Webber, who served as my Inuit and non-Inuit cultural mentors during my early days in Nunavut. To Linda Pemik, who gently pushed the boundaries of my cross-cultural understanding further. To Robert Tookoome, who taught me an important lesson in how Inuit see southerners.

To all my other Inuit colleagues, students, and friends in Nunavut who shared their love of their culture and their Land.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the true spirit of Nunavummiut, completion of this research depended on the co-operation and support of many people. I want first to acknowledge the participants in this study who made it possible by sharing their experiences so generously and thoughtfully.

Next, Dr. MaryAnn Bibby and Dr. Farah Merali were the “Elders” who wisely guided this dissertation journey with patient persistence. Dr. Rob Short supported my work throughout my doctoral program. Dr. Joe Norris, Dr. Julia Ellis and Dr. Jean Clandinin shared their knowledge and love of qualitative research with me.

Heartfelt thanks also go to my “thesis buddies” (Cheryl, Lisa, Regina, and Seonaigh), my companions on the way. Earl, who first gave me the idea of studying *qablunaaq* who had lived in Nunavut, and Martha, who assisted with skilful editorial “tweaking” at a critical moment, deserve a special mention.

Linda Passmore prepared accurate and professional transcripts in a very timely manner.

Finally, without the encouragement of my friends and family who kept saying “Don’t quit!” I may never have finished this dissertation.

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION 1
- The Nunavut Context 2
- Inuit worldview 3
- Counselling in Nunavut 4
- Personal Connection to the Research 6
- Structure of the Dissertation 8

II. LITERATURE REVIEW 9
- The Need for Competent Multicultural Counsellors 9
- Dimensions of Multicultural Counselling Competence 11
- Training for Multicultural Competence: Current State of the Art 15
- Relationship between Multicultural Competence and Multicultural Identity 16
- Theories of Multicultural Identity Development 18
  - Helms' White Racial Identity Development Model 18
  - Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity Development 21
- Cross-cultural Immersion and Identity Change 24
- Multicultural Identity and Spirituality 30
- Research Questions and Contribution of the Research 33

III. PROCESS OF INQUIRY 35
- Epistemological and Methodological Framework 35
- Narrative inquiry 36
  - Narrative Analysis and Analysis of Narratives: Personal and Public Songs 36
  - Location in Place and Time 38
- Reflexivity: Researcher as Instrument 39
- Participant Selection 42
  - Considerations from the Literature 42
  - Selection Criteria 43
  - Participant characteristics 44
- Research Interviews 44
- Ethical Considerations 50
- Interpretation: Composing the Research Text 51

IV. INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS 57
- Bev 58
- Danya 65
- Debbie 67
- Deborah 69
- Fluff 72

Meeka 73
Michelle 79
Patricia 81
Rebecca 83
Soshana 86
Portrayals of Change and Growth 88
    Increased Flow and Connectedness 88
    Incorporating Nature 89
    Change in Size 89
    Colour Changes 90
    Rearrangement 90
Summary 91

V. LEARNING HOW TO LEARN 92
Keeping an Open Mind 92
    Building a New Framework 93
    Making No Assumptions 93
    Listening 94
    Being Humbled by Inevitable Mistakes 94
    Not Being Right 94
Approaching Cultural Learning Systematically 94
    Immersing Themselves in Inuit Culture 95
    Being Mentored 99
    Reflecting 102
    Researching 103
Moments of Meaning 105
Being Aware of Learning 108
    Linking Language and Thought 109
    Understanding Non-verbal Communication 111
    Changing Feelings 112
Summary: Active and Experiential Learning 113

VI. LEARNING ABOUT THE NUNAVUT CONTEXT 115
Lessons in Pain 115
    Describing High Incidence of Abuse and Trauma 116
    Encountering Nunavut Variations of Abuse and Trauma 117
    Experiencing Cultural Differences in Responses to Abuse and Trauma 120
    Being Affected by Exposure to Clients' Abuse and Trauma 121
    Learning from Encounters with Abuse and Trauma 123
Lessons in Cultural Intervention 124
    Becoming Aware of Cultural Intervention 124
    Recognizing Issues of Power and Oppression 126
    Feeling Caught between Cultures 127

Lessons in Isolation 129

    - Feeling Personally Isolated 130
    - Experiencing Professional Isolation 130
    - Sharing Physical Hardship 132
    - Lacking Medical Services 133
  - Lessons in Community 135
    - Feeling at Home 135
    - Finding Acceptance and Friendliness 136
    - Enjoying Inuit humour 138
    - Passing Through 139
  - Summary: Hard Lessons, Rich Rewards 139

- VII. LEARNING TO BE A MULTICULTURAL COUNSELLOR 141
  - Lessons in Professional Ethics 141
    - Keeping Confidentiality in Nunavut 141
    - Establishing Professional/Personal Boundaries 145
  - Lessons in Adapting Counselling Practice 149
    - Applying Counselling Theory 149
    - Using Culturally Sensitive Interventions 151
    - Organizing Services in Response to Community Rhythms 156
    - Collaborating with the Community 157
    - Assessing Own Effectiveness in Nunavut 159
  - Lessons in Cultural/Racial Identity 159
    - Becoming Conscious of Cultural/Racial Identity 160
    - Seeing Universal Human Connections 161
    - Changing Cultural Identity 162
    - Retaining Cultural/Racial Identity 164
    - Being Uncertain about Cultural/Racial Identity 165
  - Lessons in Spirituality 165
    - Exploring Personal Spirituality in Nunavut 165
    - Connecting Spirituality with the Land 167
    - Relating Inuit Spirituality or Religion to Counselling Practice 168
  - Summary: Distilling and Blending 174

- VIII. BRINGING THE LESSONS HOME 175
  - Adjusting Personally on Return to the South 175
    - Feeling Uncomfortable in the South 176
    - Feeling Comfortable in the South 178
  - Applying the Lessons in Professional Practice in Southern Canada 179
    - Being More Flexible and Friendly with Clients 179
    - Feelings More Confident 181
    - Appreciating Community and Context 182
    - Working Cross-Culturally 183
    - Changing Academic Research Methods 185

  - Training for Multicultural Counselling 185

Assessing Relevance of Own Training to Multicultural Counselling 186
Improving Multicultural Counsellor Training 188
Summary: Nunavummiut in the South 190

IX. DISCUSSION 192
Learning: The Central Sojourning Experience 192
How the Participants Learned 192
Learning in the Sojourning Literature 197
Learning Multicultural Counselling Competence 200
Own Cultural Values and Biases 202
Awareness of Client's Worldview 204
Culturally Appropriate Intervention Strategies 206
Developing Multicultural Identity 208
Relation to Inuit Cultural Identity 208
Identity or Generativity? 210
Relation to Theoretical Models of Cultural/Racial Identity Development 211
Multicultural Counselling and Spiritual Development 214
Implications for Multicultural Counsellor Education and Professional Development 216
Multicultural Counselling Competence 216
Multicultural Identity 218
Implications for Future Research 219
Summary 222

REFERENCES 223

APPENDICES

Appendix A Participant Information Letter and Informed Consent Form 236
Appendix B Open-ended questions 239

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Participant characteristics 45

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Name Drawings – Bev 60

Figure 2. Name Drawings – Danya 66

Figure 3. Name Drawings – Deborah 71

Figure 4. Name Drawings – Fluff 74

Figure 5. Name Drawings – Meeka 76

Figure 6. Name Drawings – Michelle 80

Figure 7. Name Drawings – Patricia 83

Figure 8. Name Drawings – Soshana 87

COUNSELLORS' EXPERIENCES OF CROSS-CULTURAL SOJOURNING

I. INTRODUCTION

Canada is becoming increasingly multi-racial and multi-ethnic. People of Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit and Metis) origin comprise 4.3% of the population, with about half of this group living in urban areas. Because of high Aboriginal birth rates, the Aboriginal population is younger and is increasing three times more rapidly than the non-Aboriginal population (Statistics Canada, 2004). Immigration is also outpacing natural population increase (Statistics Canada, 2002). 18% of Canada's population is foreign-born (Statistics Canada, 2003). This growing diversity challenges counselling professionals to provide culturally sensitive, culturally inclusive services and raises the question: How does a counsellor become prepared to deliver such services?

In this research, I explored the development of Euro-Canadian women counsellors' abilities to work sensitively and effectively with cultural diversity through *sojourning* experiences (i.e. living and working temporarily within another culture). At present, the literature on multicultural[1] counselling focusses on questions such as the nature of multicultural counselling competencies (Arredondo et al., 1996; Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki & Alexander, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003). The literature, however, lacks accounts of counsellors' extended cross-cultural experiences and how those experiences impact their personal development and professional practice. This in-depth, qualitative study of the narratives of counsellors of Euro-Canadian descent who at one time worked professionally in Nunavut and are now living and working in southern Canada contributes to an understanding of how the ability to work cross-culturally is affected by sojourning.

---

[1] The term "multicultural" is one of the terms used frequently to describe the knowledge and ability to work flexibly and sensitively with people from another culture. Many other terms with similar and/or related meanings have been proposed such as "transcultural", "intercultural", and "cross-cultural". For the sake of simplicity and consistency, I will generally use the term "multicultural" since it is the one used by researchers such as Donald Sue, Janet Helms and others who have had such a significant impact on development of the multicultural counselling field (Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki & Alexander, 2001). The other terms will be used in the context of a citing a particular author's work.

The Nunavut Context

Nunavut offers the sojourner an unusual physical and social environment, one that is very different from southern Canada. The territory, which came into political existence on April 1, 1999, comprises two million square kilometers above the tree line north and west of Hudson's Bay. The population is approximately 29, 000 of which about 85 percent are Inuit. The 26 Nunavut communities range in size from a population of 25 to almost 6,000 in Iqaluit, the capital. As none of the communities have road access, all goods and people are transported by air or sealift (Government of Nunavut, 2004).

Although Inuit employment is increasing, the majority of Inuit families live in public housing and rely on social assistance payments for income. This socio-economic situation is the consequence of the Canadian government's intervention in the Arctic after the Second World War when the official policy was to settle the formerly nomadic Inuit into organized communities. Settlement in permanent communities disrupted traditional reliance on subsistence hunting and gathering while the requirement for Inuit children to attend school interfered with generational patterns of cultural transmission. Many Inuit suffering from tuberculosis were also removed for treatment in southern Canada, further disrupting generational relations (Korhonen, 2002).

Rapid social, political and economic change has taken its toll on the mental health of Inuit. Nunavut faces high rates of substance abuse, family violence, and suicide

(Korhonen, 2002). In particular, Inuit women experience mental health issues related to spousal and sexual assault including depression, suicidal ideation and attempts, interpersonal difficulties, personal and/or familial substance abuse issues, family relationship problems, and grief reactions (Abbey, Hood, Young & Malcolmson, 1990).

Inuit Worldview

Regardless of the social problems, Inuit tradition is still strong in Nunavut, as reflected in the Nunavut government's adoption of the principles of *Inuit Quajimajatiqangit* (*IQ*), Inuit traditional knowledge, as the foundation of all services and programs (Arnakak, 2002). For the Inuit, personal and community well-being are interrelated and depend on "*Inuuqatigiittiarniq*…the healthy interconnection of mind, body, spirit and environment." (Government of Nunavut, 2000, ¶ 1). As Arnakak (2002) has described the IQ principles, the Inuit value people who serve the community rather than working for personal benefit. Inuit use collaborative decision-making rather than authoritarian imposition of rules and regulations. Inuit pass on traditional knowledge and skills through respectful observation of Elders and practice under their guidance. Members of Inuit communities work together to ensure that scarce resources are used wisely for mutual benefit rather than competing for personal gain. Recognizing that humans and animals are both part of the natural world, Inuit practice environmental stewardship. According to the Nunavut Department of Health and Social Services (Government of Nunavut, 1999), respect and tolerance for individual behaviour within a community context is also an important part of the Inuit worldview, with interference being justified only by pressing community need. The Inuit worldview is thus similar in many respects to the common values of other Native American groups in Canada (Borg, Sportak & Delaney, 2002) and in the U.S. (Herring, 1992). The emphasis on community, collaboration, and non-interference in the Inuit worldview contrasts with the emphasis on individuality, independence, and competition in the Euro-centric worldview (Lafromboise, Trimble & Mohatt, 1990).

Counselling in Nunavut

As described in Korhonen (2002), most counsellors in Nunavut are employees of the territorial or municipal governments. Prior to the creation of Nunavut, job descriptions for counselling work specified possession of a relevant university degree, a requirement few Inuit were able to meet. Consequently, primarily non-Inuit counsellors from southern Canada were hired. Although various job titles existed, such as social worker, alcohol and drug counsellor or mental health specialist, all counsellors typically see clients with a wide range of problems. Private practice, as understood in southern Canada, is virtually non-existent, although some Inuit Elders and church groups provide informal counselling and support.

The Nunavut experience is an unusual one in that Euro-Canadian counsellors working in Nunavut are immersed (to varying degrees) in a very different culture, yet they are supported in their professional work by an English-speaking administration, Inuit interpreters, and the high level of bilingualism amongst younger Inuit. Thus the language barrier is less of an obstacle than it would be for counsellors working in many other cross-cultural immersion situations. Perhaps because of the language issues, counsellors who work professionally during a sojourn abroad are rare; volunteer-sending organizations such as CUSO or Crossroads rarely offer postings for counsellors, concentrating instead on placements for teachers and technical advisors. By focusing this study on counsellors who had worked in Nunavut, I took advantage of a naturally occurring situation with the potential to contribute specifically to an understanding of the influence of cross-cultural experience on multicultural competence in counselling professionals.

The multicultural counselling literature contains some recent ideas concerning culturally appropriate approaches in Nunavut. Korhonen (2002) conducted a grounded theory analysis of pre-existing interview transcripts from Inuit Elders and transcripts from original interviews with younger Inuit counsellors. Comparing her findings from the Inuit to her grounded theory analysis of the conventional and multicultural counselling literature, Korhonen concluded that the generic Western counselling model is appropriate for working with Inuit. She recommended that effective counselling with Inuit involve "a client-centred approach based on trust, understanding and acceptance of client individuality, needs and context" (p.241). Nevertheless, she also felt that the emphasis in multicultural counselling on training counsellors to become aware of cultural differences is valuable.

Wihak and Merali (2003) discussed the application of four principles of IQ to the counselling process. Drawing on the multicultural counselling literature, the authors reviewed the counselling implications of these IQ principles: *Pilimmaksraniq* (valuing knowledge gained from experience, including felt and revealed truth), *Pijitsirniq* (community orientation), *Inuuqatigiitiarniq* (respect and non-interference), and *Aajiiqatigiingniq* (inclusive decision making). For example, they suggested attending to Inuit clients' spiritual beliefs, adopting a self-in-relation perspective when collaboratively setting counselling goals with the client, becoming personally involved and active in Inuit communities, and avoiding highly directive approaches. The authors noted that many of existing recommendations in the multicultural counselling literature for work with Aboriginal clients (cf. Sue & Sue, 2003) could be applied in the Nunavut context. They suggested that Network Therapy (Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996), a form of extended family therapy developed for work with Aboriginal clients and communities, might be highly suitable in Nunavut. Wihak and Merali also voiced agreement with Korhonen (2002) that culturally appropriate approaches with Inuit may be very similar to contemporary best practices of conventional counselling. The authors, however, pointed out that application of the IQ principles may require counsellors to adapt their professional ethics to give primacy to socially-based standards over individually-based ones.

Korhonen's (2002) research and Wihak and Merali's (2003) article give some idea of culturally appropriate approaches to counselling in Nunavut. Neither of these pieces, however, looked directly at the experience of non-Inuit counsellors working with Inuit clients. The current study remedied that by exploring the experiences of Euro-Canadian counsellors who had sojourned in Nunavut and subsequently returned to southern Canada.

Personal Connection to the Research

In the tradition of heuristic research (Moustakas, 1961), the focus of this study was inspired by my passion to understand my own experience of sojourning in Nunavut. My choice to live in that remote, harsh, and isolated environment for over ten years was a consciously sought exploration in an on-going spiritual journey. I was concerned with the mission of becoming an embodiment of active compassion and felt that the experience of learning from another, very different culture would provide a crucible for that development. The association between traveling to a strange land and spiritual development in my life is not idiosyncratic. Within most of the world's great spiritual traditions, the experience of leaving home is central (Smith, 1995). Nor is my contemporary experience of being prompted by a spiritual impulse to embark on a sojourn unique. Many educational and health professionals have lived and worked in other cultures and many of these practitioners are motivated by compassion and generosity, both of which are highly valued qualities within all of the world's major spiritual traditions (Hanna, Bemak & Chung, 1999).

During more than a decade of employment in the Nunavut post-secondary education and mental health systems, I had the opportunity to work professionally with Inuit clients and students and enjoy the company of Inuit colleagues and friends. I learned to live and work in professional isolation, in a physically challenging environment.

When I returned to southern Canada, I discovered how much had changed in the intervening years, both within myself and within the culture I left so long ago. Professionally, one of the most significant changes has been the increasing emphasis on cultural understanding within the psychology and education fields. When I completed a Master's degree in Psychology almost thirty years ago, the question of culture was barely mentioned outside of the rare specific course on cross-cultural psychology. Now, cultural issues are addressed across the Educational Psychology curriculum. Through this emphasis in my doctoral courses, I became aware of how profoundly my understanding of culture and my cultural flexibility have been affected by my years in Nunavut. The focus for this research emerged from that awareness.

Structure of the Dissertation

In the following chapter, I review major theoretical perspectives currently used in the literature for explorations of multicultural counselling and multicultural identity development. Following the literature review, the Process of Inquiry chapter describes the research epistemology and research methods, including criteria for participant selection, interview approaches, and data analysis. Presentation of the data begins with an extended introduction of each participant in the research. Then, the main body of the analysis is presented in four chapters that describe how the participants learned during their sojourns, what they learned about the Nunavut context, what they learned about multicultural counselling, and how they applied their learning in professional practice after returning to southern Canada. The dissertation concludes with a discussion that relates the research findings to relevant literature, offers suggestions for counsellor education, and indicates directions for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a brief review of relevant literature on multicultural counselling. After discussing the importance of counsellors being able to work across cultures, the review then outlines dimensions of multicultural counselling competence identified in the literature, describes current approaches to professional education for multicultural counselling competence, and explores the link between such competence and multicultural identity development. The relationship between cross-cultural contact and multicultural identity development is explored in theoretical models of multicultural identity development and in narrative studies of identity development drawn from the sojourning literature. The significance of spirituality for multicultural counselling competence and multicultural identity development is also discussed. The chapter concludes with a statement of the research questions and the expected contribution of the research to the professional education and development of competent multicultural counsellors.

The Need for Competent Multicultural Counsellors

For counsellors who are professional psychologists, the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) mandates multicultural competence as part of ethical practice. Under Principle IV: Responsibility to Society, the CPA *Code of Ethics*, (2000) established two standards that speak specifically to cultural issues. Psychologists are expected to:

> IV.15 Acquire an adequate knowledge of the culture, social structure, and customs of a community before beginning any major work there.
>
> IV.16 Convey respect for and abide by prevailing community mores, social customs, and cultural expectations in their scientific and professional activities, provided that this does not contravene any of the ethical principles of this *Code*.

The revised *Guidelines for Non-Discriminatory Practice* (CPA, 2001) describe specific practices that psychologists should follow in working with diverse populations. This document encourages psychologists to:

- Be aware of their own cultural attitudes;
- Be aware of power differentials;
- Study cultural norms of diverse groups;
- Keep cultural differences in mind when discussing confidentiality, informed consent, and treatment decisions;
- Re-evaluate their own competence, attitudes, and effectiveness when working with diverse clients;
- Consult with others who are culturally competent.

The American Psychological Association Code of Ethics (APA, 2002) is more directive concerning the way diversity is addressed. According to APA's Principle on *Respect for People's Rights and Dignity*:

> Psychologists respect the dignity and worth of all people, and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination. Psychologists are aware that special safeguards may be necessary to protect the rights and welfare of persons or communities whose vulnerabilities impair autonomous decision-making. Psychologists are aware of and respect cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socio-economic status and consider these factors when working with members of such groups. Psychologists try to eliminate the effect on their work of biases

> based on those factors, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone activities of others based upon such prejudices. (p. 4)

Standard 2.01 Boundaries of Competence requires psychologists to develop cross-cultural competence:

> (b) Where scientific or professional knowledge in the discipline of psychology establishes that an understanding of factors associated with age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, or socio-economic status is essential for effective implementation of their services or research, psychologists have or obtain the training, experience, consultation, or supervision necessary to ensure the competence of their services, or they make appropriate referrals, except as provided in Standard 2.02, Providing Services in Emergencies. (APA, 2002, p. 5)

Dimensions of Multicultural Counselling Competence

The mandating of competence in working with diverse groups has been accompanied by attempts to articulate what such competence might look like. A landmark article by Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992) provided the basic framework of a 9x9 model for defining cross-cultural competencies in terms of three dimensions (attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills) within three characteristic areas: counsellor awareness of own cultural values and biases; counsellor awareness of client's worldview; and culturally appropriate intervention strategies. As described by Pedersen (2000, 2001), awareness involves being able to judge a situation accurately from both one's own and the other's cultural perspective. Knowledge increases through gaining factual information about one's own and other cultures, such as history, family and community structures, values, political, economic and religious factors. Skill requires using appropriate interventions based on the other's cultural background and language. Pedersen discussed acquisition of multicultural competence as a developmental process, starting first with deepening awareness, moving next to knowledge acquisition, and finally to skill, which is an application of awareness and knowledge.

In an effort to provide additional clarification concerning the multicultural counselling competencies, Arredondo et al. (1996) attempted in a subsequent paper to operationalize these competencies through the addition of *explanatory statements* containing "examples and anecdotes that give life to the competencies" (p. 56). For example, an explanatory statement for the competency "awareness of how one's own background influences psychological processes" was expressed as "Can identify social and cultural influences on their cognitive development and current information processing styles and can contrast that with those of others" (p. 58). An explanatory statement for the competency "awareness of one's own negative emotions" was stated as "Identify their common emotional reactions about individuals and groups different from themselves and observe their own reactions in encounters" (p.62).

In a further extension of this work, Toporek and Reza (2001) presented the Multicultural Competency Assessment and Planning Model (MCCAP). These authors added the dimensions of personal, professional, and institutional competence to the Sue et al. (1992) model. The authors explicitly see the MCCAP model being used to guide individuals and institutions in a continuous and dynamic developmental process of becoming increasingly multicultural.

Efforts have been made to validate the Multicultural Counseling Competencies empirically. To explore the factor structure of the Multicultural Counseling Competency model (Sue et al., 1992) and the explanatory statements (Arredondo et al., 1996), Holcomb-McCoy (2000) developed and administered a survey questionnaire containing statements describing specific behaviours, such as "I can discuss how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of clients" (p.88). She also gathered demographic information and background information on the graduate and post-graduate multicultural counselling training of the counsellors who completed the questionnaire. Unlike the Sue et al. model, her results indicated five distinct factors: Knowledge, Awareness, Definition of Terms, Racial Identity, and Skills. Noting the lack of generalizability of her results due to sample limitations, she concluded that additional work is needed to establish a consensus on the conceptualization and assessment of multicultural competence.

The Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) is a self-report measure developed to measure Sue et al.'s (1992) model of Multicultural Counseling Competencies. In a Canadian study of counsellor competence, Arthur and Januszkowski (2001) used this instrument in conjunction with a demographic questionnaire and a critical incidents questionnaire. Their results showed that three subscales (Knowledge, Skills, Awareness) have positive, moderate and statistically significant correlations with each other. The authors interpreted these results as showing that "the scales are measuring related but different constructs" (p.43). Using MCI scores to classify "high" and "low" competence counsellors, they also found that the strongest predictors of competence were having a culturally diverse caseload and professional training (seminars or course work) in multicultural counselling. Since they did not factor analyze their data, their findings speak only indirectly to the conceptualization of multicultural counselling competence in the Sue et al. (1992) model.

Based on the Sue et al. (1992) model, the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCAS) is a self-report instrument widely used to measure multicultural counselling competence (Ponterotto et al., 2002). Ponterotto et al. noted problems in earlier versions of the instruments, including lack of definitional clarity in the subscales, inclusion of items referring to specific scholars, and some psychometrically weak items. To revise the instrument, Ponterotto et al. conducted two large-scale studies to assess the validity and internal consistency reliability for the scale. Confirming a finding of only two factors, the authors retitled the scale as the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale. The authors caution that this two-factor structure accounted for only 32% of common variance, indicating that further work on construct development is needed on both the assessment instrument and Sue et al.'s underlying model of multicultural counselling competency. Ponterotto et al. concluded by calling for in-depth qualitative research as an appropriate method to "capture the interacting complexity of the tripartite model" (p. 173).

Empirical research on multi-cultural counselling competence has relied on self-reports of counsellors collected using scales requiring further development work to be psychometrically sound. In a literature review, Fuertes, Bartolomeo and Nichols (2001) found no studies looking at the relationship of self-reported competence with process or outcome of counselling, nor have instruments to assess clients' perceptions of counsellors' multicultural competence been developed. These authors suggested that qualitative research is needed to generate descriptive data needed to answer fundamental questions about multicultural counselling.

Training for Multicultural Competence: Current State of the Art

Institutions that train counsellors and other educational professionals have been responding to the increased focus on the development of multicultural competence with courses and programs directed to that purpose. Typically, institutions that train counsellors will offer courses focused specifically on the development of multicultural competence (Brown, Parham & Yonker, 1996; Neville et al., 1996). Students in these courses are predominantly members of the White majority culture. Contact with members of cultural/racial minorities is usually limited to instructors, a few fellow classmates, and guest speakers, although some courses have involved more extensive interaction through activities such as mentoring by minority group members (Salzman, 2000). Although curricula vary, such courses generally meet three hours per week for one term. Through a variety of didactic and experiential methods, the courses address awareness and attitudes, knowledge, and skills. For example, Kim and Lyons (2003) described the interesting approach of using experiential learning games to develop multicultural counselling competency. Although this training strategy appears promising, the authors did not provide systematic evidence of its effectiveness.

Recognizing that a single course is only the starting point in educating multiculturally competent counsellors, many institutions have taken the infusion approach, incorporating multicultural content across the curriculum (D'Andrea, Daniels & Heck, 1991). To assist with development of such programs, Ponterotto, Alexander and Grieger (1995) outlined a checklist for counsellor training programs that identifies six major themes to be addressed in program design: minority representation, curriculum issues, counselling practice and supervision, research considerations, and student and faculty competency evaluation. The authors further offered 22 specific items related to the themes (e.g. whether faculty and students use diverse research methodologies) that can be used for institutional self-assessment of multicultural competence. Similarly, Arredondo and Arciniega (2001) described strategies and techniques for integrating the teaching of multicultural competencies in a variety of content areas and provided specific objectives, learning activities, and expected outcomes for courses ranging from introductory counselling to family counselling and career counselling to research methods.

Much thought and energy is being devoted to developing effective methods of training competent multicultural counsellors but these efforts are hampered by a lack of knowledge. As Fuertes et al. (2001) have commented, "the process by which counsellors become multiculturally competent is poorly understood. Researchers need to better understand how, when, and by what process counsellors become multiculturally competent" (p. 10). One promising research direction concerns the relationship between multicultural competence and *multicultural identity* development.

Relationship between Multicultural Competence and Multicultural Identity

Research has demonstrated a link between multicultural identity development and multicultural counselling competency. Multicultural identity can refer to both cultural identity and racial identity. Cultural identity involves an individual's feelings of belonging to a particular culture. When the individual feels s/he belong to more than one culture, s/he has a multicultural identity (Matsumoto, 2000). As discussed by Fischer and

Moradi (2001), the concept of racial identity encompasses both feelings of belonginess to a racial group and the process of ego formation in which the individual makes a decision about the role of race in his/her life.

Ottavi, Pope-Davis & Dings (1994) found that self-reports of more advanced racial identity development were associated with higher levels of self-reported multicultural counselling competency, leading these authors to recommend that interventions aimed at facilitating racial identity development be included in multicultural counsellor training efforts. In a factor analytic study of the multicultural counselling competencies identified by Sue et al. (1992), Holcomb-McCoy (2000) found that Racial Identity Development appeared as a fourth, independent factor in addition to the factors of Knowledge, Skills, and Awareness.Vinson and Neimeyer (2000) carried out correlational research that showed that graduate students reporting higher levels of racial identity development also report higher levels of multicultural counselling competence.

Training focused on the development of multicultural counselling competency has been associated with advances in racial identity development. McAllister and Irvine (2000) reviewed a variety of research studies exploring the relationship between different models of racial/cultural identity development and cross-cultural competence in educational professionals. Their review showed that higher levels of racial identity development are consistently associated with higher levels of multi-cultural competence, non-racist behaviour, and knowledge about other cultures and races. Brown et al. (1996) found that graduate students participating in a multicultural counselling course showed higher levels of self-rated White racial identity development on completion than at the beginning. Neville et al. (1996) reported similar findings, with the change in racial identity remaining stable at a 1-year follow-up. Parker, Moore and Neimeyer (1998) similarly found that graduate student participants in a training program based on multicultural counselling competencies (Sue et al., 1992) reported higher levels of racial identity development and increased comfort with cross-racial contact.

Although existing literature demonstrates a correlation between racial identity development and degree of multicultural competence, it says relatively little about the nature of that relationship. When discussing the limitations of their own and existing research, Vinson and Neimeyer (2000) concluded that longitudinal studies are needed to explore the nature and stability of this relationship further. McAllister and Irvine (2000) identified well-designed studies using naturalistic observation as necessary to assist educators to develop effective interventions for changing attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs.

Theories of Multicultural Identity Development

While models of multicultural and/or racial identity development have proliferated in the literature (Fisher & Moradi, 2001), two models are particularly apropos to this research: Helms' (1990,1995) White Racial Identity Development Model and Bennett's (1986, 2001) Model of Intercultural Sensitivity Development. Helms' model is widely cited in the multicultural counselling literature, while Bennett's model is influential in research on sojourning.

Helms' White Racial Identity Development Model

Helms (1990; 1995) described the process of identity change as a maturational one "triggered by a combination of cognitive-affective complexity within the individual and race-related environmental stimuli." (Helms, 1995, p.184) As a person encounters racial material in the environment and is not able to make it meaningful or cope with it, s/he has to develop new *schemata* (ways of behaving) that reflect cognitive, emotional and behavioural processes governing interpretations of racial information. Helms considered her theory a developmental one but revised her nomenclature to *statuses* from her original notion of stages. With the achievement of more advanced statuses, earlier statuses remain available in the person's repertoire and may be expressed behaviourally.

In Helms' model (1995), a White person's encounter with a Black person initiates *Contact*, the first phase of racial identity development. At this stage, the White person is unaware and unsophisticated on the question of race, and may reflect racist attitudes and beliefs in his/her behaviour. Continuing interaction with the other race is seen as necessary for the next development of *Disintegration* to occur. During this phase, increased awareness of race leads to confusion and ambivalence. The person's responses to this may involve overidentification with people of colour, paternalism, or a retreat in to White society. During the *Reintegration* phase, the White person accepts racist views of White superiority to try to resolve conflicting feelings. Further development in the *Pseudo-independence* phase is precipitated by a jarring racial event that causes the person to question racist views and recognize White responsibility for racism. During *Immersion/Emersion*, the White person explores what it means to be White. In the final *Autonomy* phase, the White person engages consciously with people from other cultures and works with them towards eliminating oppression and racism (Helms, 1995).

The theme of White privilege runs throughout Helms' (1990, 1995) description of White Racial Identity statuses. In the Contact phase, a White person would deny that White privilege exists, while the Autonomy stage is characterized by the capacity to relinquish the privileges of racism. The concept of White privilege is a difficult one for many White people to grasp. Martin (1997, p. 56) has suggested "One reason White people don't think about being White is that they may not need to." McIntosh (1995) described some of the ways that White privilege impacted her daily life, such as being in the company of people of her own race most of the time, and never being asked to speak for all White people. Although these authors have been writing about racial privilege in the United States context, Harper (2002) has described the similar operation of White privilege in relation to White teachers working with Canadian Aboriginal groups. Wihak (2004) has provided a personal narrative of how her understanding of being White in Canada, with its associated privileges, developed through an extended sojourn in Nunavut. Neither Harper nor Wihak, however, linked awareness of White privilege to a process of identity change, as described in Helms' developmental model.

As Helms (1995) has discussed, racial/cultural identity development of both counsellors and clients has an impact on counselling relationships, particularly in cross-racial situations. Helms identified three types of relationships defined by relative racial identity statuses: *parallel, progressive*, or *regressive*. In parallel relationships, the counsellor and client are at similar phases of development and hence both are interested in maintenance of harmony and avoidance of tension. In progressive relationships, one participant has a more sophisticated racial identity understanding than the other, which leads to growth-producing discourses. Regressive relationships are characterized by the counsellor having a less developed status than the client, leading to tension and discord in the relationship.

Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity Development

Working within the field of cross-cultural communication and adaptation, Bennett (1986) has proposed a comprehensive phenomenological model of the developmental process involved in moving through three *ethnocentric* stages and three *ethnorelative* stages. Ethnocentrism is defined as making the assumption that one's own cultural worldview is reality. Ethnorelativism involves the assumption that cultures can only be understood relatively, with no absolute standard of right behaviour or absolute values. Bennett based the model on his 15 years of experience as an educator in intercultural communication. His stated purpose in developing the model was to "guide the *sequencing* of concepts and techniques to match some typical progression of development in students" (p. 28). Hence, Bennett's work seems particularly apropos in relation to educational efforts to develop multicultural competence. Further, because he is concerned with international education situations that could involve White people from one culture adapting to another White-dominated culture, Bennett's theory describes the cultural adaptation process without reference to race. His model may therefore be helpful for Euro-Canadian counsellors working with immigrants and refugees from invisible minorities.

In Bennett's (1986, 2001) model, the major factor in the development of successful intercultural sensitivity is a changing response to *difference*. When a person is in the *Denial* stage of ethnocentrism, difference is ignored or intentionally avoided; cultural diversity is something that happens somewhere else. This stance can be maintained through either physical isolation such as one might find in a small, rural town or by maintaining social barriers such as the phenomenon of racially or culturally distinct neighbourhoods. Bennett described the denial stage as superficially benign, with little overt negative evaluation of cultural differences. Denial of cultural difference, however, implicitly considers others to be less than human and therefore subject to control and regulation. As Bennett (1986, p.33) noted, denial is "a luxury of the dominant group" because they can "afford both financially and psychologically to remain oblivious to cultural differences." In the *Defense* stage, difference is experienced as threatening, and hence one culture is denigrated while another is seen as superior. Unlike the denial stage, specific cultural differences are recognized and acknowledged and specific defenses against perceived threats are created. Denigration takes the form of negative stereotyping, statements of overt hostility, and in some cases, creation of ideologies concerning inferiority of the other culture (e.g. Ku Klux Klan). The defense of superiority focuses on positive evaluations of one's own group, rather than explicit negative evaluations of the other, although the other is implicitly considered to be inferior. Some individuals manifest the defense stage as reversal, denigrating their own culture while extolling the superiority of the other. This phenomenon can sometimes be seen in Foreign Aid workers and also in members of oppressed minorities. In the final stage of ethnocentrism, *Minimization*, any perceived differences between cultures are overwhelmed by perceived similarities; universal characteristics are, however, almost always those that are valued within the original culture. Claims for cultural similarity may be based on *Physical Universalism*, the idea that all human beings share a common genetic heritage and physical requirements for life; cultural differences are considered trivial compared to physical similarities. *Transcendent Universalism* is based on the idea that all human beings are subject to universal laws, be they religious, political or spiritual, but these so-called universal laws are derived from one's own worldview. Cultural differences are seen as interesting and/or as needing to be converted to the one true way as represented in the individual's own culture (Bennett, 1986, 2001).

As a person moves into ethnorelativism, difference is acknowledged and respected in the *Acceptance* stage. This usually involves first the acceptance of behavioural differences, notably languages, nonverbal behaviour, and communication styles. Later, relativity in values and worldview are accepted, which is predicated on the emergence of cultural self-awareness and an understanding of values as active human creations. In the *Adaptation* stage, the person is able to use acceptance of difference to relate and communicate across cultures. Bennett (1986, 2001) distinguished adaptation from assimilation, where one's identity becomes absorbed in the new culture. Rather, the individual adds new skills and ways of being to an expanded cultural repertoire. Initially, adaptation involves empathizing with the other culture's perspective though a temporary shift in frame of reference. Later, the ability to experience culture pluralistically, from within each culture's frame of reference, develops. Bennett saw this phase of *Pluralism* as embracing biculturalism or multiculturism, when an individual internalizes two or more cultures. Bennett proposed that pluralism could be developed accidentally through living experiences with another culture without preparation; an example of this might be the children of expatriates growing up in a foreign country. In this situation, a generalized skill in adapting to culture differences may not develop; that requires a conscious internalization. In the final *Integration* stage, difference becomes "integral to identity" (Bennett, 1986, p. 58). During the first phase of this stage, *Contextual Evaluation*, two or more cultural frames can be applied in a given situation to evaluate what course of action would be most appropriate. With further development of integration, the person experiences *Constructive Marginality*, a "powerful position from which to exercise intercultural sensitivity" (p. 63). In this state, there are "no unquestioned assumptions, no intrinsically absolute right behaviors, nor any necessary reference group" (p. 58). The person experiences a self that is constantly creating reality through conscious application of different cultural frameworks. Significantly, Bennett offered the opinion that development of adaptation and beyond to integration requires extended contact with another culture. Bennett suggested that a minimum of two years with intensive cross-cultural interaction is a necessary but not sufficient condition for developing the later stages of Ethnorelativism.

Although parallels between the models can be seen, Bennett's (1986, 2001) model differs from the WRID (Helms, 1990, 1995) in two ways. First, Bennett's later two stages of ethnorelativism appear to describe a higher level of cultural identity development than is depicted in the terminal stages of Helms' model, with qualities of great cognitive and affective flexibility. Second, Bennett's model is lacking the political and economic emphasis on racism, privilege, and commitment to social action that are themes throughout Helms' model. Although Bennett (2001) did acknowledge that members of an oppressed minority might experience the developmental process differently, he did not elaborate on this, nor did he discuss changes in political-economic consciousness accompanying majority group members' multicultural identity development.

Cross-cultural Immersion and Identity Change

In the theoretical literature on racial/cultural identity development, cross-cultural contact is considered a key condition for development to occur. The developmental models of multicultural identity change described above posit cross-cultural experience as a definitive element in the progression towards more advanced stages of multicultural identity development. The theories agree that some type of change in cognition and affect is required and consider cross-cultural contact a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for multicultural identity development to occur.

Within the multicultural counselling literature in general, we have surprisingly little evidence on how extensive cross-cultural experience affects the process of identity change. The current edition of the *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling* (Ponterotto et al., 2001) begins with life stories of pioneers in the field of multicultural counselling in which cross-cultural contact figures large (Ponterotto, Jackson, & Nutini, 2001). Of the twelve narratives presented, ten were written by authors who have lived the experience of being a member of a visible minority culture in the United States. The two White authors also experienced cross-cultural lives: Pedersen as coming from Danish immigrant stock and Reynolds as the lesbian partner of an African-American woman. Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) did attempt to relate previous cross-cultural contact to initial and final multicultural competencies of graduate students in a multicultural counselling course but difficulties with instrumentation made their quantitative results problematic to interpret. In their qualitative findings of students' experience during the course, cross-cultural contact did emerge as an important factor in the development of multicultural competence.

Within the existing literature on training for multicultural competence in counsellors, relatively little emphasis is placed on the role of cross-cultural contact although several authors make passing note of its possible importance (Gopaul-McNicol, 1997; Neville et al., 1996; Ottavi et al., 1994; Ponterotto et al., 1995; Sevig & Etzkorn, 2001). Sue and Sue (2003) have, however, proposed a training model aimed at White Identity Development that does incorporate some cross-cultural contact. In that model, such contact is restricted, with visits to "communities with large minority populations" (p.161) occurring only at the end of training after a series of more limited and structured encounters.

Boyle, Nackerud and Kilpatrick (1999) reported on an unusual experiment in social worker training that involved short international exchange programs with social work schools in Mexico for two small groups of students. Their results were sufficiently encouraging that the exchanges have now been institutionalized. Nevertheless, the 2-week time frame of their program is far short of the 2-year minimum that Bennett (1986) asserts is necessary for higher levels of ethnorelativism to emerge.

While considerable research on the cross-cultural experience of refugees and immigrants does exist, such research typically is framed within the sociological and anthropological concepts of acculturation and assimilation rather than within developmental concepts of the process of identity change (Kim, 2001). In the management literature, studies of expatriate sojourners abound but these are primarily focussed on issues such as selection, training, adjustment, and work effectiveness. A handful of studies within that literature do, however, speak to the question of the relationship between cross-cultural experience and identity transformation in members of the White dominant North American culture.

Osland (1995) interviewed returned U.S. businessmen concerning their experiences living and working abroad. Based on her own expatriate experience, Osland chose Campbell's (1968) description of the myth of the Hero's Journey to guide her interview protocols and data analysis. Although Osland did not focus her discussion on identity change, the myth is in fact a story of such a transformation process. The succeeding stages on the Hero's Journey lead ultimately to becoming *Master of two worlds.* Within Campbell's framework, the returned hero can move freely between the everyday world and a higher, spiritual consciousness. For expatriates, Osland interpreted this to represent "biculturalism, along with the ability to use the skills they learned abroad, and a heightened consciousness of themselves and the world" (p. 10).

In Osland's (1995) narrative analysis, she was able to trace the pattern of the Hero's Journey and link the changes her participants described to their experiences and learning while living abroad. Osland discussed these changes as a transformational process that involved both "letting go" and "taking on." Expatriates let go of a range of cognitive, attitudinal and social factors including cultural certainty, unquestioned assumptions, personal frames of reference, accustomed roles and status, knowledge of social reinforcement, accustomed habits and activities, and known routines. In a parallel process, they take on internalized perceptions and values of the other culture, broader frames of references more accepting of difference, acceptance of roles assigned by the other culture, knowledge of the other culture's social norms and behaviours, and an on-going experience of novelty and learning. The expatriates in Osland's study identified many benefits from this often-challenging process: "increased tolerance, patience, confidence, respectfulness, maturity, open-mindedness, competitiveness, adaptability, independence, sensitivity, and decreased impulsiveness" (p. 154).

Schild-Jones (1999) explored the process of becoming *transcultural*, the events and experiences that move an individual through the developmental stages described in a model such as Bennett's (1986). In a qualitative study, Schild-Jones used a hermeneutically inspired, naturalistic inquiry model to carry out and analyze in-depth interviews with 14 American women who had spent two or more years living in Japan. These women were *trailing spouses* and were not employed while living abroad.

Six themes, representing a unifying pattern, emerged from Schild-Jones' (1999) analysis: Preparing, Strategizing, Exploring, Processing, Supporting, and Returning. As she herself commented, these themes closely parallel those found in Osland's (1995) study of businessmen abroad. Not content with the sense of linearity and hierarchy implied in such an organization of themes, Schild-Jones extended her analysis to reflect better the sense of "risk, discovery and growth" (p.129) that her participants expressed throughout their stories and the sense of a recursive transitional process. Drawing on literature from chaos theory, systems theory, and creativity, Schild-Jones described the women in her study as involved in a process of creative self-regulation and active discovery that led to transformation.

The studies by Osland (1995) and Schild-Jones (1999) provide evidence about the relationship between cross-cultural experience and identity change. The two narrative studies in addition offer rich descriptions of the change process, likening it to spiritual journeys of transformation. Neither of the studies, however, addressed significant attention to what this transformation means to the individual once s/he has returned home: how the person experiences a transformed self or how s/he applies the learning in a new situation. Osland's discussion of the "Return phase" focused on the short-term adjustment difficulties her business man participants experienced and their disappointment that what they had learned was typically neither recognized nor valued by their employers. The women in Schild-Jones' study of trailing spouses also reported both transitional difficulties on their return and the sense of having benefited personally from their experience without providing much detail on how they were using what they had learned. Further, although both Osland and Schild-Jones explicitly link the developmental process of sojourning to spirituality in their analysis and discussion of their findings, neither author explored this question in detail with participants.

Finally, Smith and Morrisette (2001) have published a recent research report that speaks directly to cross-cultural experience of counsellors working in a Canadian context. In a qualitative study, they conducted in-depth interviews with five White professional counsellors with a minimum of two years experience in working with First Nations clients. The research publication is not clear on whether these counsellors lived in First Nations communities, or whether they continued to live in predominantly White communities while serving First Nations clients. Nevertheless, it is clear these counsellors did have extended and extensive cross-cultural contact. The analysis of themes in the interview data showed that encountering difference was a key aspect in counsellor development as they learned to understand client worldviews and learned about the historical, cultural and socio-economic factors in the lives of First Nations clients. The counsellors reported having to demonstrate a willingness to learn about First Nations culture and to evolve professional identities that encompassed a broader role in community life, a tolerance for dual relationships, and egalitarian approaches to counselling. In addition, the counsellors developed a greater awareness of White privilege. They also stressed the importance of maintaining their own cultural identity and not over-identifying with First Nations culture, particularly in relation to personal spirituality. These counsellors "described how their work with First Nations stimulated the development of their own culturally relevant spirituality" (p.83).

Multicultural Identity and Spirituality

The relationship between spirituality and psychology in cross-cultural contexts is increasingly being recognized. For example, Murray (2002) reported on psychologists in Pakistan who incorporate Islamic teachings into Western-based therapeutic approaches. Lee and Armstrong (1995) have discussed the similarities and differences between traditional healing and contemporary mental health approaches. They suggested that:

> "psychospiritual influences in traditional helping may need to be considered as important aspects of intervention with clients from many cultural backgrounds. Within many cultural groups, there is often little distinction made between spiritual existence and secular life. The philosophical tenets inherent in spiritual beliefs influence all aspects of human development and interaction." (p. 451)

Sue and Sue (2003) emphasized the importance of multicultural counsellors understanding the principles of indigenous healing, one of which is the use of traditional spiritual and religious beliefs in the healing process. They used case studies to describe the misunderstandings that can occur when Western counsellors are unfamiliar with indigenous beliefs around disease and treatment, such as spirit possession. Providing guidelines on indigenous healing for multicultural counselling and psychotherapy, they recommended that the importance of shamans "who are perceived to be keepers of timeless wisdom" (p. 197) be recognized and if possible, shamanic healing rituals be incorporated into counselling.

Many authors have recognized the relationship between spirituality and the development of multicultural identity. Vaughn (1985) portrayed the emergence of a "transpersonal self" as the fruit of a transformative process of spiritual development. She described the transpersonal self as wise and compassionate, "cross-cultural rather than culture-bound" (p. 27). Kim (1997) discussed the "emergence of intercultural personhood" (p.443) through a process of identity transformation, relating this to Eastern and Western concepts of spirituality. Hanna et al. (1999) introduced the concept of "wisdom" as a fundamental quality of an effective multicultural counsellor, describing the cultivation of this highly valued characteristic within the spiritual traditions of many different cultures and recommending the incorporation of practices for spiritual development into counsellor training programs. In reviewing the life stories of the pioneers of the multicultural counselling movement, Ponterotto et al. (2001) commented on their level of spirituality and their sense of spiritual connectedness.

Fukuyama and Sevig (1997, 1999) have proposed that the dimension of spirituality be added to models of multicultural competence and identity development for counsellors. In their discussion of spirituality, they were careful to distinguish this idea from organized religion, although noting the close relationship between the two concepts. They adopted the definition of spirituality developed by the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling:

> the animating force in life, represented by such images as breath, wind, vigor and courage. Spirituality is the infusion and drawing out of spirit in one's life. It is

> experienced as an active and passive process. It is an innate capacity and tendency to move towards knowledge, love, meaning, hope, transcendence, connectedness and compassion. It includes one's capacity for creativity, growth and the development of a values system. Spirituality encompasses the religious, spiritual and transpersonal. ("Summit Results", 1995 cited in Fukuyama & Sevig, p. 5)

As Fukuyama and Sevig (1999) point out, in most non-Western cultures, spirituality is an integral part of cultural worldview, and further, is often centrally involved in education and mental health. Even amongst North Americans, clients tend to value spirituality more than counsellors do (Pedersen, 1998). Therefore, multicultural counselors need to understand spirituality as it manifests in clients' lives. Major figures such as Jung, Rogers and Perls drew on spiritual traditions in developing their therapeutic approaches. More recently, transpersonal psychology (cf. Grof, 2000; Wilber, 2000) actively incorporates spirituality into therapy, as do many popular self-help approaches modeled after the Alcoholics Anonymous 12-step program.

Fukuyama and Sevig (1999) discussed the close links between spiritual values and multicultural values. For example, spiritual values of connectedness and compassion have parallels with multicultural values such as seeing cultural similarities and being empathic. As they pointed out, many spiritual traditions contain a description of predictable phases of spiritual evolvement that lead to abandonment or death of a personal ego and development of identification with universal principles. Fukuyama and Sevig saw the process as similar to and supportive of the process of racial identity development that is associated with multicultural competence, suggesting, "that multicultural learning fosters spiritual evolvement and that spiritual evolvement strengthens the multicultural learning process" (p. 75). These authors concluded:

> Professionals who are committed to multicultural awareness…will find that tapping into a spiritual river will help nourish and replenish their energies and strengthen them for further challenges. This will also give "deeper" meaning for these experiences. Concurrently, for those committed to a spiritual path, multicultural experiences can be used to stimulate, challenge and propel them (downward, inward, outward) and to expand consciousness, increase compassion and nurture humor. (p. 159)

Research Questions and Contribution of the Research

As discussed in the foregoing literature review, multicultural competence has been increasingly recognized within the counselling field as an important quality for professionals working in today's multiracial, multiethnic society. According to the multicultural counselling literature, multicultural competence involves changes in attitudes, knowledge and skills. Little is known at present about the process whereby counsellors develop multicultural competence or how to cultivate this quality effectively through professional education programs. The literature however, links increasing multicultural competence with multicultural identity development and spiritual development. Cross-cultural experience is in turn associated with both multicultural identity development and spiritual development. Experiential accounts of the developmental process from the counsellors' perspective and in particular, counsellors' experience of sojourning (temporarily living and working within another culture) are lacking, however.

The present study was intended to remedy that gap through a qualitative inquiry into the experience of Euro-Canadian counsellors who had sojourned in Nunavut. In the present research, I explored two main research questions:

- How do Euro-Canadian counsellors make meaning of the experience of living and working in another culture? and
- How do Euro-Canadian counsellors express their cross-cultural experience in working with culturally diverse clients?

The findings of this study are useful in a number of ways to increase understanding of multicultural competence and identity. First, the information can assist those responsible for the professional education of counsellors or other professionals such as teachers and nurses to understand and appreciate the contribution of cross-cultural experience in the development of multicultural competence and identity. This in turn may affect both selection and training processes. Second, the study contributes to the exploration of the relationship between multicultural competence and multicultural identity change and the influence of spirituality. Third, by focusing on counsellors and describing how they applied the fruits of their sojourns on their return home, the study will add to the existing body of narrative studies of sojourners.

III. PROCESS OF INQUIRY

In this chapter, I delineate epistemological and methodological considerations underlying the qualitative research framework used in this study. I provide a discussion of the narrative inquiry method used for data collection and analysis and address reflexivity concerns. I describe the process of participant selection and summarize relevant characteristics of the counsellors who participated in the research. I detail the interview process and analytic approach, as well as discussing ethical considerations.

Epistemological and Methodological Framework

This research was conducted within the constructivist paradigm of epistemology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As Braud and Anderson (1998) have described, the constructivist epistemological framework and the qualitative methodology associated with it are particularly useful when we are concerned with questions of experience and conceptualization of experience, as is the case with the research questions in this study. Briefly, in the constructivist paradigm:

- Realities are multiple, constructed and holistic;
- Knower and known are interactive and inseparable;
- Only idiographic (time and context-bound) working hypotheses are possible;
- Cause and effect cannot be distinguished since all entities are in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping;
- Inquiry is value-bound (adapted from Braud & Anderson, 1998, p.8).

Morrow, Raksha, and Castaneda (2001) have also suggested that qualitative methods are a natural form for research on multicultural counselling, since the methods reflect the same skills as are valuable for counsellors working with diverse client groups and moreover, represent ways of knowing that are valued in many non-Western cultures. They have described several characteristics of qualitative research that make it particularly suitable for the multicultural counselling field such as inclusion of context, emphasis on researcher's self-awareness, and use of participants' own paradigms of knowledge.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative is (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson & Lieblich, 1995; Mishler, 1986) a method for analyzing and interpreting stories of life experience, including personal narrative and autoethnography (Schwandt, 2001). Bruner (1986, 1990) has suggested that narrative is fundamental to an understanding of how self-identity is constructed, how people construct meaning in their lives, and how meanings are shared in a culture. Given the focus of this study, narrative therefore seemed to be the most appropriate method.

Narrative Analysis and Analysis of Narratives: Personal and Public Songs

While considering how to begin the analysis, a vision arose of my participants singing in chorus, with their voices sounding so strong when blended together. Then, each participant would sing alone, revealing a different facet of the sojourning experience. This image reminded me that in traditional Inuit culture, a distinction is made between *personal* and *public* songs. According to Serkoak (2003, ¶ 3-4):

> In the past, singing was also a very important part of Inuit culture. Almost every adult had their own personal song, of which there were many types: songs of contest, songs of satire, and occasionally, humorous songs with obscene lyrics. There were songs about hardship, happiness, loneliness, love, and hatred.
>
> Every song was a story in itself, a life experience of the composer. Some songs, however, had no ownership. These were sung to Inuit transients who attended a dance while passing through a camp, and were sometimes even sung to non-Inuit. Personal songs could also be given to another person. A song owner might give his song to show appreciation for help given in time of need, or to someone bearing the same name as himself.

The Inuit distinction between personal and public songs is similar to the distinction Polkinghorne (1995) made between "narrative analysis" and "analysis of narrative". In "narrative analysis", the data are descriptions of experiences or events, which are used to generate a cohesive story, grounded in time and space; this approach is analogous to personal songs. In "analysis of narratives" the data are stories from which one extracts themes, concepts or commonalities; these are analogous to public songs.

Although some narrative studies seem to clearly fall in one or the other of Polkinghorne's (1995) categories (cf. Osland, 1995 for an "analysis of narratives" and He, 1998 for a "narrative analysis"), other studies make use of both approaches. For example, Harper's (2002) report of two White women teaching in Northern communities both discussed the themes of "Lady Bountiful" and "Janey Canuk" in relation to White identity and briefly related the individual stories of two participants. As I grappled with a similar research question, the approach that Harper took had a strong appeal in that it honours both the uniqueness of individual experience and the shared archetypal qualities of that experience. In reading her work, I can recognize the themes from my own experience of the Arctic while her participants' stories show the unique qualities of each individual manifestation. In approaching this research, then, I was determined to use narrative analysis to preserve the personal songs my participants shared with me, while using analysis of narratives to develop public songs that would relate individual participant's experiences to each other and to the literature.

Location in Place and Time

According to Polkinghorne (1995), narrative is strongly located in time and space, what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have called the "*three dimensional inquiry space*, with temporality along one dimension, the personal and social along a second dimension, and place a third." (p. 50).

Place

As my research focussed on counsellors who have sojourned in Nunavut, the question of place and how it shapes experience infused the inquiry. The counsellors who participated in this study have lived in a harshly beautiful landscape, with an expansiveness and openness rarely found on this planet. They have spent time dwelling in communities of Inuit people who call that landscape "Our Land". These communities are strange ones, artificially created by the Canadian government with many modern amenities but also very isolated and remote. Interaction and friction between Inuit and *qablunaaq* (Inuktitut word for non-Inuit) sensibilities is a daily occurrence. Sensitive attention was needed in listening to and interpreting their stories to reflect the influence of the environment on participants' experiences.

Time

Temporality, another one of the dimensions in the inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) is a fluid concept in the context of Nunavut. My research focussed on counsellors who sojourned there during the decade preceding and the few years since the creation of the new territory in 1999. It was an interesting period, politically and socially, and in that historical sense, "time" is very well specified. But in a place of such extremes, where the sky stays light for months on end in the summer, where nights last for 24 hours in the winter, where the cycle of activity is governed by the tides and migration of animals, time has a whole different meaning. When experiencing the lives of the Inuit on the land, I enter a timeless space, a place before the concept of "time" was invented. As Sam Pistiulak, one of my Inuit friends said, "We go out on the Land and just forget about the clock" (quoted in Paskievich, 1992). I needed to reflect both the historical time period and this timeless quality in my analysis of the participants' narratives.

Reflexivity: Researcher as Instrument

7

As Morrow et al. (2001) and Willig (2000) have discussed, researcher subjectivity is openly acknowledged in qualitative research. The researcher is the "instrument" and must engage in an authentic process of self-reflection to identify assumptions and biases derived from her/his own experience. Further, the researcher must continually identify when and how her/his experience is shaping the process of inquiry.

This research is a narrative inquiry into the experiences of strangers, people who have sojourned in a land and culture different from their own, and examines how they made their experiences meaningful. Doing such a narrative study is an endeavour in interpretive inquiry and as Smith (2002) has pointed out, strangeness is exactly what makes interpretation necessary. As a narrative researcher, I must recognize that I always bring my *horizons* or *prejudices* (in the sense of pre-judgments) with me. According to Smith (1993), "the understandings one has of the reasons and motives of another cannot be understood apart from the background knowledge or web of social meanings – what one might call theory—of the interpreter" (p.185). In trying to understand participants' stories of their experiences in Nunavut, I was looking at two levels of interpretation: The interpretations they use to make sense of their own experiences, and the interpretation I used to make sense of their interpretations.

To be an effective researcher, I had to be as aware as possible of my own historical situatedness and how this affects my understandings. Further, I had to be open to having my horizons changed and expanded through the dialogues with my participants (Swinton, 2001). I had to be willing to acknowledge the inadequacies in my own pre-understanding and to welcome the transformation of my own horizons (Ellis, 1998), a profound exercise in humility.

I have already identified in the Introduction to this dissertation how my interest in this question arose from my personal experience in Nunavut. In terms of general background, as a chartered psychologist, I have considerable experience in establishing rapport and listening empathically to the stories of others with an open, non-judgemental attitude. As a social policy consultant, I carried out a number of qualitative studies (e.g. on program planning for developmentally delayed individuals, social housing, and immigrants' access to trades and professions) that involved in-depth interviews of diverse individuals. These experiences helped me to cultivate the ability to hear, synthesize and reflect the experiences of others with some sensitivity and validity. Finally, I have practiced intensive meditation for many years, observing with equanimity while thoughts, feelings and phenomena arise and pass away; that is, I have cultivated the quality of non-clinging awareness that assisted me in not imposing my preconceptions and biases on the participants' stories or at least, in being aware when I am inclined to do so.

Because I feel that my understanding of other people and other cultures was enriched and expanded by my time in Nunavut, and because this feeling is echoed by many of my friends who have lived there, I had to be aware of an assumption that everyone is changed, and changed in a positive way, by cross-cultural immersion. My own experience was intimately connected to a conscious process of spiritual growth, which supported me immensely in letting go of culturally conditioned ideas when they conflicted with the immediacy of my experience there. Members of my spiritual community lived in Iqaluit throughout the time I was there, lending me tremendous social support. The notion of identity development in the multicultural literature is foreign to my own spiritual tradition, in which identity is considered merely a convenient fiction, with no permanent or independent existence.

When I went to Nunavut, I was eager to learn about Inuit culture and both sought cultural experiences and read widely about the Arctic and the Inuit. I had generally positive experiences with Inuit, including camping with Elders, spending time with Inuit artists, and working closely for several years with a fluently bi-cultural Inuit colleague. Before I went to Nunavut, my studies in social work and public administration had introduced me to critical theory and social action research, and I had been involved in political activism for disadvantaged groups (single mothers, people with disabilities). These experiences affected my perceptions and experiences in Nunavut. In conducting the study, I had to remain open to the ways in which the participants' experiences differed from mine.

Participant Selection

Considerations from the Literature

In narrative inquiry, the research commonly begins with the researcher's autobiographical connection to the question or puzzle (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Since my life has been so profoundly shaped by the time I spent in Nunavut, that experience was the one I wanted to explore. This in turn focused the research on other counselling professionals who have also lived the Nunavut experience. Based on Bennett's (1986) observation that two years of cultural immersion is the minimum time for significant changes in multicultural identity to occur, length of time in Nunavut was also a selection criterion. Finally, as described by Osland (1995) and Schild-Jones (1999), the transition phase of returning to one's own culture can be difficult, and it often takes some time before returned sojourners can see the effects of their experiences. To allow for this, the participants had to have left Nunavut at least one year prior to the study.

Although definitions of "race", "ethnicity" and "culture" and their degree of overlap are problematic (Matsumoto, 2000), I chose to focus on the experiences of Canadian-born counsellors of Euro-Canadian heritage. In the multicultural counselling literature, membership in a visible minority is seen as having a significant impact on identity formation. Helms' (1990, 1995), for example, proposed distinct models for "White" and "Minority" identity development. My own experience suggests that Inuit also respond differently to people of colour, although no systematic research exists on this topic. Some Inuit devalue Blacks because Whites devalue them; some Inuit have traditional enmity with southern Aboriginal groups; some Inuit expect people of Asian heritage to act like Inuit because of the visual similarity in appearance. To simplify the task of interpretation, therefore, I selected only counsellors of Euro-Canadian heritage as study participants. Given these considerations, participants were selected through purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990), using my own previous professional contacts as a starting point.

Selection Criteria

In searching for participants, I looked for information-rich examples of counsellors who:

- Lived in Nunavut for a minimum of two years and whose professional employment involved counselling work with Inuit;
- Left Nunavut a minimum of one year and a maximum of ten years ago and preferably have been employed in their professional capacity in southern Canada since their return;
- Are non-Inuit (i.e. not eligible as beneficiaries under the Nunavut Land Claim agreement)
- Were born and raised in Canada, of Euro-Canadian origin.
- Use English as their working language.

This personal history information was collected through screening interviews prior to inclusion in the study, and served as background biographical information for selected participants.

Although the appropriate number of participants was not specified in advance, I ultimately included 10 women who met the selection criteria. With each additional interview, new perspectives on the Nunavut experience did emerge but other issues began to repeat themselves. By stopping at 10 participants, I felt I had both sufficient diversity and sufficient consensus on important themes. The fact that all of the participants were women reflects the predominance of women in the counselling profession.

Participant Characteristics

Table 1 identifies the participants and provides relevant background information, including their educational backgrounds, the length of sojourn in Nunavut, the time since return, their professional positions in Nunavut, previous cross-cultural experience, and their occupation since returning. I have also identified whether the participant worked in a regional centre, with approximately 70-80% Inuit population or in a small community with an Inuit population exceeding 95%, since location influences the intensity of the sojourning experience. Each of the participants is introduced individually in the following chapter. Because the Nunavut counselling community is so small, I have not provided other biographical information that could serve to identify the individual participants who chose to remain anonymous.

Research Interviews

Narratives were collected through open-ended personal interviews with each participant, a process that Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to as "composing the field text" (p. 110). In contacting potential participants, I provided a general frame to the

Table 1

Participant Characteristics

Name	**Education and multicultural training**	**Prior cross-cultural experience**	**Time in Nunavut and since return**	**Sojourning location in Nunavut**	**Professional Position in Nunavut**	**Current professional work in southern Canada**
Bev	BEd; non-formal training in counselling	Worked with Inuit in Ottawa	19 years there; 1 year back	Small community	Teacher; Director of community counselling agency	Doing volunteer work with church
Danya	PhD Psychology	Little previous cross cultural experience	2 years there; 7 years back	Regional centre	Counsellor at college	Private practice, psychology
Debbie	MA in HR Management; post-grad counsellor training	Worked with Aboriginal bands, Alberta	7 years there; 6 years back	Regional centre	Instructor in social work program	Developed, runs home for homeless men
Deborah	BA Criminology	CUSO placement in PNG	6 years there; 9 years back	Small community; Regional centre	Social Worker; Adult educator; Social Work Supervisor	Working abroad with Oxfam, mostly women's issues
Fluff	MSW in psychiatric social work	Grew up cross-culturally; Worked with Aboriginal bands	4 years there; 10 years back	Based in regional centre but traveled to small communities	Mental Health Specialist	Mental health worker; Aboriginal clients; work with Aboriginal bands

Table 1. (cont'd)

Participant Characteristics

Name	**Education and multicultural training**	**Prior cross-cultural experience**	**Time in Nunavut and since return**	**Sojourning location in Nunavut**	**Professional Position in Nunavut**	**Current professional work in southern Canada**
Meeka	BEd Cross-cultural courses, teaching practicum	Growing up as minority in Aboriginal community; Anglophone in Montreal	7 years (approx.); Back about 7 years	Regional centre	Director of community drop-in centre for mental health patients	Taking MEd (counselling); street counsellor with Aboriginal youth
Michelle	BSW	None	About 4 years; back about 8 years	Based in Regional centre, traveled to small communities	Mental Health Specialist	Psychodrama, counselling with Aboriginal bands
Patricia	MSW Cross-cultural course work	Worked with Aboriginal bands	4 years; back 1 year	Regional centre Small community	Social Worker; Community Wellness Worker	EAP counsellor; fly-in counsellor for Inuit clients in Nunavut
Rebecca	BSW Cross-cultural course work	Taught ESL in South America	2 years; back 2 years	Small community	Social worker	Addictions counsellor; some Aboriginal, minority clients
Soshana	MA, Psych. Cross-cultural course work	Lived in group homes with diverse population	4 years; back 9 years	Based in regional centre, traveled to small communities	Mental Health Specialist	Doing PhD on trauma; counselling Aboriginal, refugee clients

process by describing the research as an exploration of the experience of counsellors who have sojourned in another culture and how they make meaning of their experiences.

Initial contacts to explain the study were made by telephone, followed by an e-mail or fax of the Participant Information Letter and Informed Consent form (Appendix A). Once the potential participant had time to review the information, I made a follow-up phone call to answer any questions and to schedule an appointment for the in-person interview.

To ensure that I collected needed biographical information, I asked each participant meeting selection criteria to answer the following factual questions:

- What was your professional training? Did it involve formal training in cross-cultural counselling?
- What were you doing before you went to Nunavut?
- What type of cross-cultural experience did you have before going to Nunavut?
- Why did you go to Nunavut?
- What was your professional position in Nunavut? How long did you hold this position?
- What was the nature and extent of your contact with Inuit and your involvement in Inuit culture?
- Why did you leave Nunavut?

- What kind of work have you been doing since returning from Nunavut? Does it involve cross-cultural contact?

To introduce the interview process, I adapted a method of *concrete poetry* developed by Norris (1995). Prior to the interview, each participant was asked to write her name on two index cards in such a way that the shape, colour, size, placement, etc. of the letters in the name reflected a picture of herself, with one card portraying "How she saw herself" before she went to Nunavut (*Before Name Drawing)* and the second portraying "How she sees herself now" (*After Name Drawing)*. Each participant was then invited to describe the two cards narratively.

This interviewing technique, which will sound familiar to clinicians, is derived from ideas developed by art therapist Betensky (2001) and psychiatrist Kvale (1999). Wiseman (1995) effectively used a similar technique in a narrative study of loneliness in university students.

All but two of the participants agreed to complete the Name Drawing exercise, and provided drawings for inclusion in the study data. Three participants introduced their own variations into the exercise. Soshana drew a Before name and then a *During/After* name. Danya drew three names: *Before, Immediately After,* and *Now.* Bev chose to do a series of drawings spanning from the beginning of her 19-year sojourn to a year after she left Nunavut.

Two of the participants did not feel comfortable with the exercise. Debbie provided a word picture, claiming that she could visualize what I was asking, but said she lacked sufficient artistic skill to portray it. Rebecca politely declined the opportunity to do the exercise.

As Carson (1986) and Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have discussed, research interviewing is a form of conversation. Following the narration of the Name Drawings, I asked each participant to tell me about her experience of living and working as a counsellor in Nunavut, with a reminder that I am interested in cross-cultural contact in relation to multicultural counselling. Unlike more structured questions that I could derive from theoretical multicultural counselling literature on racial identity development (cf. Helms, 1990,1995) or on learning to be multicultural as a cognitive-affective process (cf. Bennett, 1986; Kim, 1997, 2001), this approach left open how participants chose to relate their own stories. Theoretical constructs were held "lightly in the background" (J. Ellis, personal communication, November, 2002) throughout the inquiry rather than being used explicitly to frame the entry research question.

The participants' spontaneous narratives were supplemented by open-ended questions if the topic areas of interest in this research did not emerge or if more in-depth exploration of a particular area was required. Examples of open-ended questions that were asked are provided in Appendix B.

Because the participants are scattered across the country, the interviews were conducted during a two-month period. Interviews were held in the participant's own home or office. Many of them generously offered me meals and/or overnight accommodation. The interviews ranged in duration from 1.5 hours to almost 3 hours. The interviews were both audio taped and video taped. Taping began with the participant's narrative about her Name Drawings, or in the case of the two participants who declined, after general introduction of the study and establishment of rapport. The full interviews were audio taped but because of technical limitations, only the first 60 minutes of each interview were video taped. As the videos were intended only to assist with interpretation of the audio transcripts, this limitation did not affect the subsequent analysis.

After the interviews, the audio tapes were transcribed. An experienced professional typist, who signed a confidentiality pledge, was hired to transcribe tapes from seven of the participants, while I personally transcribed the remainder due to participant preferences. For the interviews transcribed by the professional, I reviewed each transcript on a word-by-word basis against the tape recording and made any necessary corrections.

A copy of the transcript, with lines numbered for ease of reference, was sent to each participant for review. During a scheduled follow-up interview, each participant had the opportunity to add, delete or change material. With the participants' permission, the review interviews were also audio taped. Three of the participants provided considerable supplemental material. Two of the participants chose to provide their comments and corrections through e-mail. Comments made during the review were also used with permission in the data analysis process.

Ethical Considerations

As several authors working with Narrative Inquiry have discussed, ethical considerations are foremost throughout the research process; the method is founded on respect for the participants and their stories (cf. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson, 1996). As a chartered psychologist, I am further bound by the Code of Conduct of the Canadian Psychological Association. In addition, the study conforms to the requirements of the Ethical Review Board in the Department of Educational Psychology and the University of Alberta.

Some participants chose to disguise their identities by using a pseudonym. For those participants, I also disguised biographical details in the narratives. In a few instances, the participants and I also modified details of an incident or anecdote to protect the confidentiality of former clients.

Narrative research is a process that changes both the researcher and the participant. Sometimes, a change process can be difficult or painful. Some of the participants did experience distress when remembering incidents in Nunavut. With these participants, we halted the interview until their composure was re-gained and they felt able to continue. Before leaving, I ensured that they had adequate emotional support available. Many of the participants also have on-going relationships with counsellors and expressed the ability and intention to address any disturbing material the interview had touched.

While the data was being used for analysis, it was locked in a cabinet at the researcher's home. Any identifying information regarding the participants was stored separately from the interview data. For five years following the study, the data will be held in locked, secure storage.

Interpretation: Composing the Research Text

As described by Morrow et al. (2001), the reports of narrative research are themselves constructed as teaching stories, "with an obvious lesson embedded" (p. 586). For narrative researchers, analysis of participants' collected stories and writing a research report that gives authentic voice to the participants and the researcher is a creative, organic process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson & Lieblich, 1995).

The initial stage in interpreting the participants' narratives was to review the audio tape and video tape of each interview session with an open and uncritical mind. Following a suggestion from Nelson (personal communication, March, 2004), I began by "spending a day" with each participant. I reviewed the video tape of the interview session and read the printed transcripts several times while holding the questions: "What are this participant's meanings conveyed in this conversation?" and "What form of narrative will best express the participant's meanings?"

I then composed a research report for each participant. Stake (1995) has suggested that a chronological approach is one of three possible ways to develop a research report. In the sojourning literature, similar stages to the journey have been identified in a number of studies (Osland, 1995; Schild-Jones, 1998). This method of starting to make sense of the transcripts seemed appropriate initially. Drawing on the other narrative studies of sojourners, I analyzed each transcript in terms of these categories:

- Before going to Nunavut -- occupation, education, cross-cultural experience and/or training
- Early days in Nunavut -- anecdotes of surprises, stresses
    - adaptation process
    - anecdotes, critical incidents
    - description of process and feelings about process
- Experiences during time in Nunavut

    - adaptation of professional practice – ideas and/or examples
    - communication and language issues
    - personal supports and/or approaches to processing
- Leaving Nunavut -- why left, feelings about leaving
- Returning to southern Canada
    - re-entry problems
    - feelings
- How Nunavut experience showed up now in professional practice, life
    - anecdotes, critical incidents
    - description of process

The first distillation from the raw transcripts was developed by using "cut and paste" to compose a chronological "pastiche" for each participant, made up of judiciously selected verbatim quotes, loosely bridged with transitional phrases and minor editing. In doing so, I was aware that I was imposing a chronology on the participant's narratives that did not necessarily exist in the raw transcripts. Nonetheless, it immersed me completely in the data and gave me the opportunity to note emerging themes.

Having developed a pastiche for each participant, I then "smoothed" it by removing the quotation remarks around "sound bites", while leaving them for verbatim quotations of whole sentences and paragraphs. I made minimal changes to words and phrases to smooth the story for ease of reading. The trail from the raw transcripts to the intermediate pastiche form of the stories to the smoothed version is easily traceable through the use of word processing software. The smoothed stories were then again returned to the participants, with the exception of Deborah, and each was asked to verify that the smoothed story was an accurate distillation of her interview and reflected her Nunavut experiences. With their approval, the smoothed stories then became the primary data source for the ensuing interpretive analysis.

My attempts to contact Deborah to review her transcripts were unproductive, as she was working in isolated countries. Deborah, however, was one of the participants who chose to use her real name, and she had also clearly stated in the interview which material she did not want included in the study. I therefore felt she would not object to my using her interview transcripts. To create a pastiche for her, I used a method of thematic analysis described in Warwick-Bibby (1993). My co-supervisor cross-checked the analysis against her own analysis of a sample of the transcript, and again cross-checked the pastiche story against the thematic analysis. This served as a check for the truthfulness of Deborah's story.

Once all of the smoothed stories were complete, it became apparent that there was considerable redundancy. Each participant's special insights were in danger of being swamped in the sheer volume of material. I then adopted another approach recommended by Stake (1995), focussing on one or more aspects of the individual's story. I identified three dominant themes in each participant's narrative and extracted material relating specifically to those themes. This, combined with the participant's narrative of the Name Drawing exercise, formed what I thought of as the personal songs for each participant. Then, extending the musical analogy, I conducted what I called a "Resonance and Dissonance" analysis, extracting from the other participants' stories material relevant to each individual participant's major themes and analyzing how their narratives were similar or dissimilar. At this point, I journalled my personal resonance and dissonance with the participants' themes as a way to articulate how my horizons were changing through the interpretive process.

This next level of interpretation again revealed considerable redundancy. I looked for ways to group the material based on similarities among the major themes of the individual participants. I focussed on identifying the public songs, areas of consensus where the participants' sang with one voice.

At this point, I re-visited the preliminary notes I had made when beginning the interpretive process and saw that "learning" was one word all the participants had emphasized. This insight made me deeply reconsider what the participants' had been trying to convey. I then realized that the participants had all been telling me teaching stories, stories that they felt might assist other counsellors to learn to work cross-culturally. Their narratives were not constructed as a chronological "there and back again" kind of story, but as a series of linked stories, each with its own lesson embedded. My task then became to make these lessons obvious in the structure of the interpretive research text.

Applying the idea of learning to the major themes in the participants' personal songs, I could see the themes grouped into four areas. The participants talked about:

- How they learned to work in a new cultural context
- What they had learned specifically related to the Nunavut context and Inuit culture;

- How they had learned to be a multicultural counsellor in Nunavut;
- How they applied their learning from the Nunavut experience in their work in southern Canada.

I next reorganized the participants' material from the personal songs and the Resonance and Dissonance analysis to fall under one of these major Learning themes, with occasional dips back to the original transcripts to extract relevant comments and judicious removal of extraneous information. I then deepened the Learning analysis to identify sub-themes to further highlight different facets of their experiences.

The titles of the four interpretive chapters and major themes within each chapter represent the public songs, where the participants are singing in chorus. The sub-themes and perspectives within them represent the personal songs, where one or two participants' experiences contribute variations on the major themes. By using this approach to compose the research text, I feel I have honoured both the participants' individual voices and their interest in understanding how their experiences compared to those of other counsellors who had sojourned in Nunavut.

IV. INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS

Although all of the participants in this study were Euro-Canadian counsellors, each participant is an individual, with her own particular life history, personal experiences, professional training, and previous cross-cultural exposure. What each woman brought with her to Nunavut shaped and framed the experiences that she had there, and how she interpreted them. In this chapter, you are introduced to each individual participant, her education and work experience, her previous cross-cultural contact, her reason for going to Nunavut, the work she did there, how long she stayed, and how long it has been since she returned.

Each participant, with the exception of Rebecca, is introduced through her narration of her Before and After Nunavut Name Drawings, giving an immediate sense of her sojourning experience and how she made meaning of it. Rebecca did not create a name drawing for this study. She did, however, send me her recently completed Master's thesis, on mental health issues in Nunavut. In that document, I came across a paragraph that I have presented as a piece of *found poetry* (Butler-Kisber, 1998) to depict Rebecca's feelings about the effect of her Nunavut sojourn.

From the individual narrations, a sense of commonality of experience is also apparent. Several areas of consensus are notable. First, all the participants described having some type of cross-cultural experience prior to going to Nunavut, either in their personal lives or their professional lives. Second, all the participants conveyed the sense of having gone to Nunavut as an active choice to search for a new or different experience.

All of the participants described themselves as profoundly affected by the Nunavut sojourn. In their narratives of their Before and After Name Drawings, and in the images themselves, the participants depicted their time in Nunavut as a period of enrichment, change, growth, and learning. Several of the participants used similar stylistic devices in their Before and After Nunavut drawings to illustrate their sense of the changes in themselves: A shift from block to cursive script, a change in colour choice for their names, re-arrangement of the order of the letters in their names, expanded size, and incorporation of environmental features (e.g. sun, wind). My interpretation of the participants' introductory narratives and similarities in their Name Drawings follows the presentation of the individual introductions.

Bev

When she was a child, Bev's neighbour at the family cottage was the Bishop of the Arctic. "As a result of seeing skins and parkas and kamiks…through my childhood, I was always fascinated with the North," Bev explained. "My contact with Nunavut had been pretty strong, and it had a lot of influence on my life." She remembered the Bishop of the Arctic coming to her church and saying what was needed in the North were Christian teachers who would really love the people. Bev became very close friends with the Bishop's wife, who told her he had always said that Bev would some day go to Nunavut and make a difference.

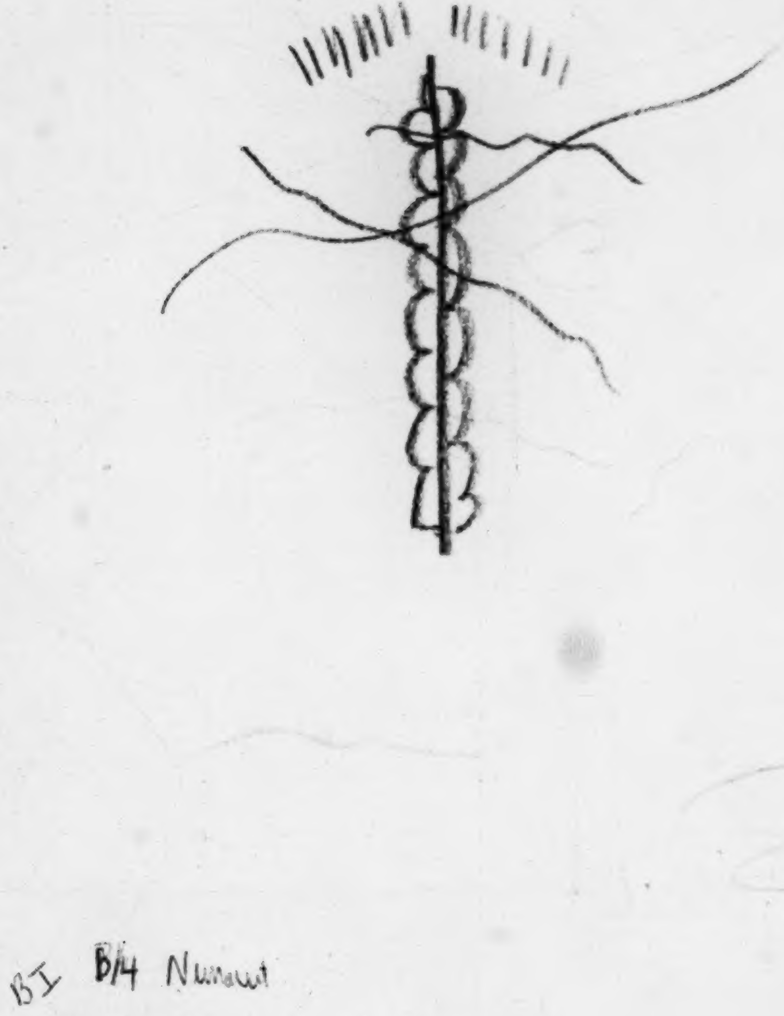
"I went to Nunavut first…as a supply teacher," Bev recounted. "I was there for six weeks." Afterwards, the Department of Northern Affairs asked her to come and work as the recreation and educational counsellor for the Inuit students living in Ottawa. When Inuit House closed and her program ended, Bev became a cultural development officer and edited *Inuktitut* [name of Inuit language] magazine. She also edited a newspaper on education for the parents of the kids who were in Ottawa attending residential high school.

Her boss at the time had been an old style Hudson Bay factor who instilled in Bev an absolute respect for the people. Bev was in contact with a couple of old missionaries who were flabbergasted that after a year and half of working with the Inuit students, she didn't speak Inuktitut. She recognized, "If you're going to work with Inuit properly, you need to learn the language, period." At her request, her boss arranged a secondment for her to work as a teacher in an Inuit community. This sojourn was supposed to be two years, but it ended up being 19 years because in the first month or so, Bev met an *Inuk* [singular form of Inuit] hunter who became her husband. They married and together had four children – a boy and three girls.

Bev drew a series of pictures in lieu of the Before and After Nunavut name exercise, describing how she had changed from her early days in Nunavut to the present time. She pointed out, "Note that I myself am always represented by a straight line. And then whatever is added on to the side shows what I am."

The bumps in what Bev labelled her "B/4 Nunavut" picture (Figure 1a) represent what she called her "faulty drivers and lots of ideas for growth". Bev said, "I was a bleeding heart. I had all kinds of…spiritual and emotional agendas going on. And I had a really romantic view of Inuit." The little igloo shows that she really appreciated the traditional things.

The 1983 drawing (Figure 1b) is the time when she met her Inuit husband. She pictured him in grey with sort of spines on him, because he was a very thorny person. Her romantic ideas were exploded. "Kaphooey!" The relationship with her husband was very


BI B/4 Nunavut

(a)

Figure 1. Name Drawings – Bev

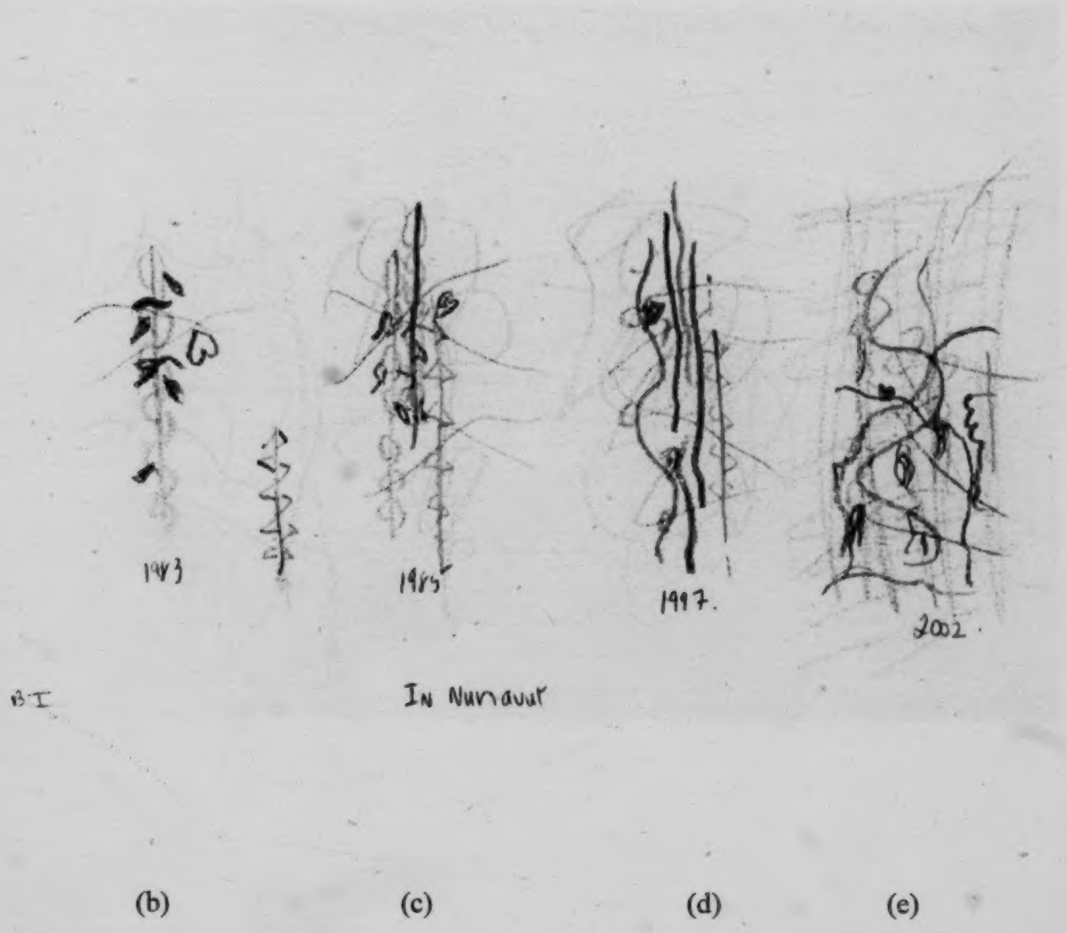
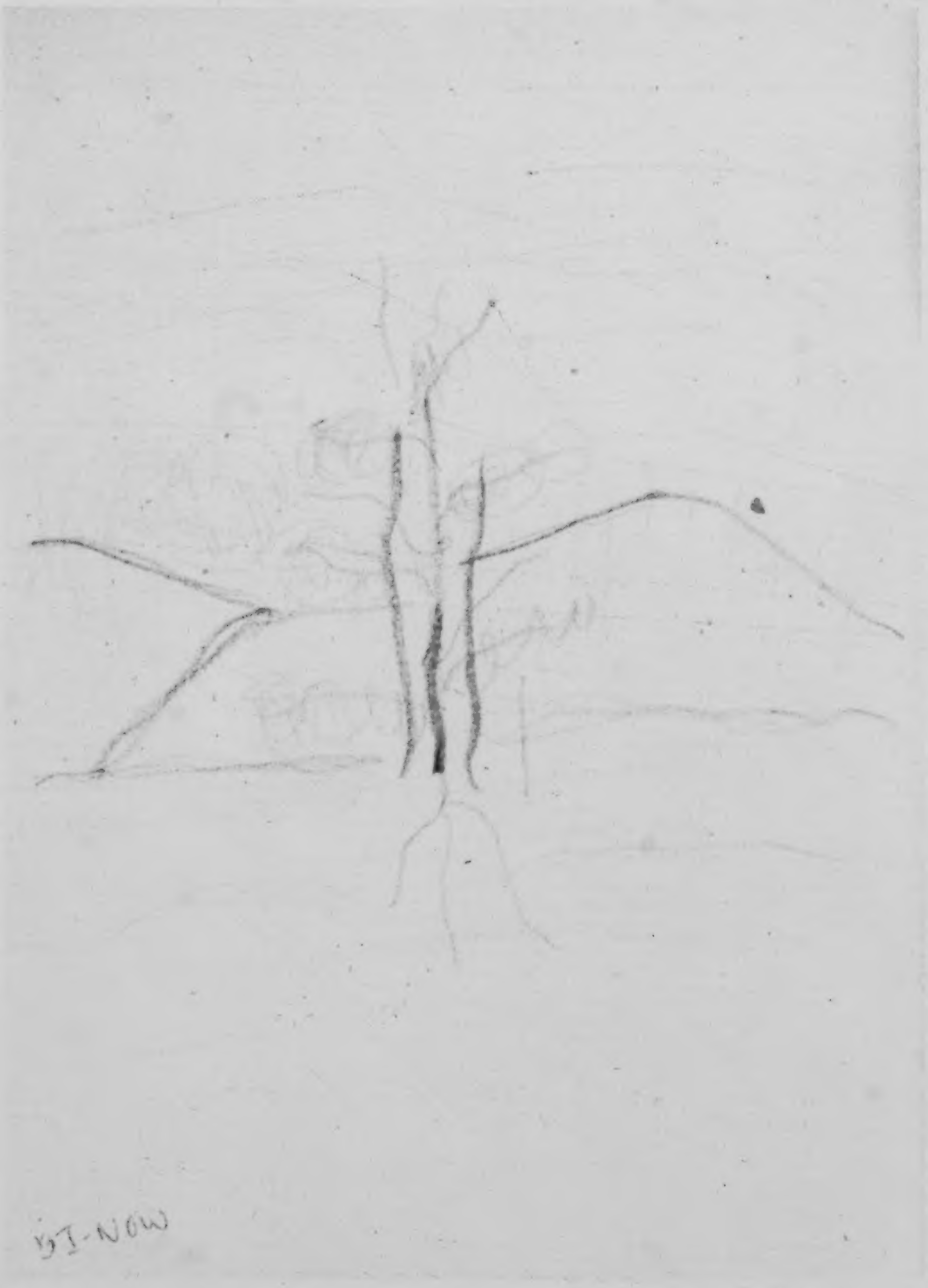

1983
1985
1997.
2002.
B.I.
IN Nunavut
(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)

Figure 1 (continued). Name Drawings – Bev



(f)

Figure 1 (continued). Name Drawings – Bev difficult. "My heart was upside down," Bev recollected, "But I was out to rescue. I thought I could handle it."

In 1985, their son came along and to start off, he was a wonderful guy [gold line in drawing.] but he had bumps on him (Figure 1c). Bev said, "My ideology turned to grey, which is not a bad thing. It's a kind of reality setting in." Her heart was starting to right itself because having children is a wonderful experience.

"By 1997," Bev said pointing at the picture from that year (Figure 1d), "I was beginning to collapse." This was when she was changing direction from teaching to a counselling role first with the school and then as Director of a community-based Family Resource Centre. After taking a High Risk kids workshop, "I realized that I wasn't ok." In the last 2 or 3 years before she left, Bev said:

> I was starting to really see reality….Inuit culture is wonderful but it's not the only culture in the world. Inuit culture, the traditional culture is great, but there are some really sick things going on, just like there are in our culture.

In the 2002 drawing (Figure 1e), "You can see I'm really wilting. The kids were also just going nuts….The blue haze of ideology and romanticism had turned to straight grey lines. And I understood things pretty clearly."

Bev described herself as very religious, so she read the Bible a lot. The readings in the scriptures were giving her the message: "Leave. It's time to go." Bev was very concerned about leaving the North. "Just professionally. Trying to find a job…when nobody knows you." As she got on the plane, she cried. But "It's been the right thing to do," she acknowledged.

Looking at her last drawing (Figure 1f), Bev laughingly said, "So here's me now. With my buds. My limb buds are growing and I'm a tree. I'm not an *Inukshuk* [Inuktitut word meaning a dry stone sculpture of a human being]." Pointing to the B/4 Nunavut drawing, she commented "This is a very…simple picture; it's a very romantic picture. I'm right at the center of things. It's a very *qablunaaq* [Inuktitut word meaning non-Inuit] picture." She described the *2002* drawing (Figure 1e): "This is very Inuk – not because it's so messy, but because it's so complex." Now that Bev is in southern Canada, she explained, "Being able to put my roots down into the garden, I almost…weep when I see the beauty of the peas popping up. Feel the earth and smell the leaves and hear them trickling down." Reviewing the series of drawings again, she said

> Through this period…I froze myself culturally. And then, as I thawed, and came to reality, I started to feel myself in a whole new way. If I had gone from here to here, I would not be this tree….This has changed me immensely, culturally. It has made me…more qablunaaq….I'm a much richer person now and I have my kids. I have my roots down deep into the earth and the water and arms reaching up to the sky. I know the land intimately in a way that you can never know the land down here."

Bev had been back from Nunavut for just over a year at the time of our interview. In the intervening time, she had sought counselling for herself and her children to help with the transition to a new culture and community. She had also been employed part-time by a local church to catalogue a library of books on spiritual healing. When we met, she was applying for full-time positions working with Aboriginal youth, where she could use her cross-cultural knowledge.

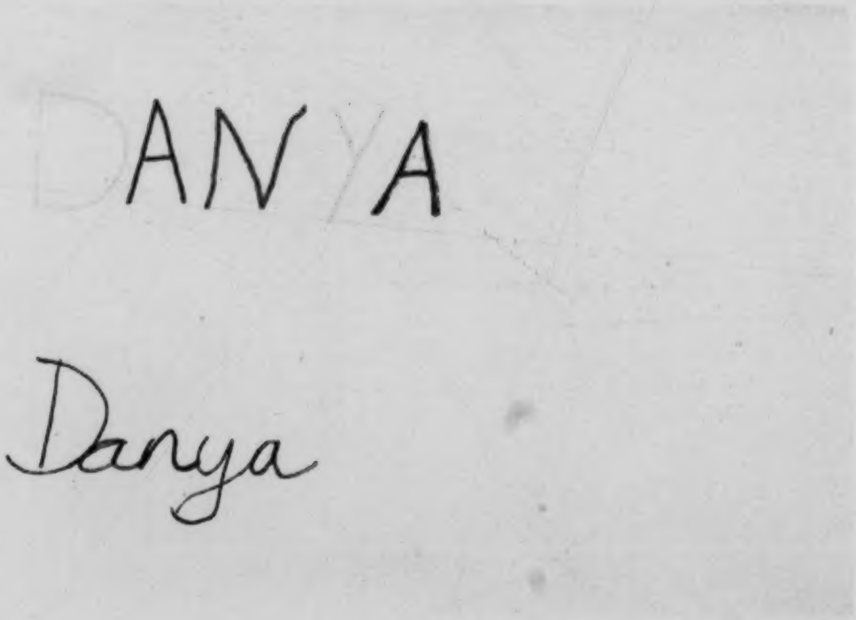
Danya

Danya and her husband went to Nunavut after they both had completed PhDs, she in clinical psychology and he in economic development. Danya had several years experience as a licensed psychologist, working with adolescents as in-patients and outpatients in a large, metropolitan hospital setting. Danya went to Nunavut with little cross-cultural experience or training, although she is Jewish and described herself as having the Jewish and the Canadian culture. She and her husband both wanted to do economic development work and thought they were going to go to Africa or Asia. But a job for her husband came up in Nunavut and Danya was able to find work as a counsellor at the local community college, so they went. Danya sojourned in Nunavut for two years, She had been back in southern Canada for seven years at the time of our interview, where she maintains a private practice as a psychologist in a large metropolitan area.

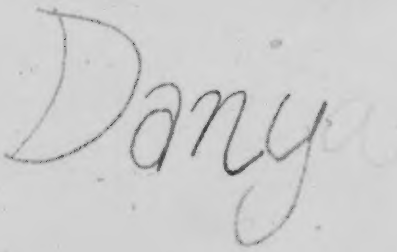
Danya described herself as a pretty happy person by nature, bubbly and happy. At the beginning of her Nunavut sojourn, Danya said, "I started pretty optimistic and making sure I had the professional role." Danya's Before Nunavut drawing (Figure 2a) of her name reflects this. As she explained,

> It's standard letters, because I saw myself in the more professional mode….I was still thinking…it's important to do things by the book and keep the protocols and keep all the boundaries…really clear. The colours are bright because I felt quite optimistic and…very positive about coming and about the work that I would do.

In the *Right After Nunavut* name drawing (Figure 2b), the colours are darker, showing how Danya saw herself in the first year or so after returning from Nunavut. "Through my experience some of my optimism faded…because of the stories I'd



(a) [above] (b) [below]



(c)

Figure 2. Name Drawings – Danya

hear….I'd think, 'There could be nothing worse than this,' and then I'd hear something worse." The letters are cursive and blended together to show a positive part of her experience. "I really learned that you can't…have those boundaries all the time."

Danya's third drawing (Figure 2c) shows how she sees herself a number of years later. She commented, "I've got some of my joy back. It's not quite the optimism of before, which is perhaps unrealistic. But I've got more life force in me." The forms of the letters are also in between the letters in her Before and Right After drawings. Danya described how this depicted her approach to her work now:

> I'm more human, more me in the therapy sessions….I still think that there can be trouble when too much connection is going on in terms of seeing clients in the outside world and dual relationships….So I've had to distance a little bit, but still kept…more comfortableness with the client.

Debbie

Debbie grew up in northern Alberta, and was involved in Aboriginal communities and spirituality while still a teenager. She earned an MSc from the University of Alberta in Human Resource Management, an after-degree certificate in addictions from McMaster, and took graduate level course work in educational counselling from the University of Alberta. Recognizing the influence of Christianity in Aboriginal communities, she took a certificate in Theology at St. Paul's University in Ottawa to make up for the lack of religious instruction in her upbringing. None of these educational experiences, however, included course work in cross-cultural issues.

Before going to Nunavut, Debbie's entire professional career had been spent working with Aboriginal communities. She was the head of social development for nine bands in northern Alberta during a time when they were negotiating an agreement for the transfer of Child Welfare services from the province. Previously, she worked in the training department of Native Counselling Services.

In Nunavut, Debbie was employed as an instructor in the Social Work program at the local community college. She lived in Nunavut with her husband and daughter for six years. Since her return from Nunavut nine years ago, she has been running a small residential treatment shelter for homeless men and teaching in a community college Social Work program.

When I asked Debbie to make the Before and After drawings of her name, she said she could visualize what I was asking, but did not feel able to express it through drawing. Instead, Debbie raised her hand and, shading her eyes, turned her head slowly from side to side in the classic gesture of searching the landscape. "I went to Nunavut very much with a seeking attitude, and what I was looking for was some personal peace in my life and a new experience…" she said. As a child, Debbie had always had a vision of going to work with Inuit people. "Why?" she said. "Who knows?" But as she explained, "I saw going to Nunavut as a completion of…the vision of my life. The opportunity came up. I was offered the job, and so I went."

Debbie found the peace she was seeking in the Nunavut environment. For an After image, Debbie offered, "We always had such a spectacular view of the ocean and just the surroundings." She explained, "You'd have to really ignore your environment to think that you're larger than life there, because it's just so vast." At that point in her life, it was a very important thing to find perspective in the universe. The Inuit people helped with that, too. "Because of their courage, because…they were so willing to look at themselves, so willing to change, so willing to dialogue and learn and exchange ideas." She commented, "I left Nunavut with very much of the people that touched my life in my heart. I really miss it. I left with very, very warm feelings in my heart about the people, and that's still there because people keep in touch with me."

Deborah

I was able to catch Deborah between her international development assignments in countries as diverse as Ghana and Afghanistan. The tranquil beauty of the garden at her home in the Gulf Islands was a sharp contrast to the harsh and difficult environments where her love of learning has taken her since leaving Nunavut nine years ago. As Deborah explained, "When you plunk yourself down in a new culture, you're constantly learning....That's a very easy way of being challenged to learn."

Before going to Nunavut, Deborah's life and work experience had given her background training in cross-cultural work and accepting different people's versions of reality. With university training in criminology, she had started working in prisons initially as a guard and went on to do other kinds of prison work, supporting parolees and then counselling in prison settings. Throughout university, she had done volunteer counselling on crisis intervention and suicide hotlines. She had worked with Aboriginal organizations and as the director of a halfway house in Toronto for men with combined prison/psychiatric backgrounds. She had a formal induction into cross-cultural orientation with CUSO in preparation for work for the Justice Department in Papua New Guinea where she spent two years. Even with this wealth of experience, Deborah described her six years in Nunavut, working as a social worker and adult educator in a small community and then as a social work supervisor in a regional centre, as definitely her greatest cross-cultural learning experience.

The changes she felt are apparent in her Before and After Name Drawings. Deborah described her drawing of how she saw herself Before going to Nunavut (Figure 3a) this way:

> Before I was relatively self-contained, self-assured, fairly cool, just predictable, and life worked fairly much the way I felt it should, fairly confident. That's why my name is high up on the card. Yes, just confident, and I know I wasn't conservative, but relative to the impact of the experience of working in [name of small community], yes, fairly conservative.

Deborah's *After* drawing (Figure 3b) shows how much her picture of herself was re-arranged by her Nunavut experiences and what she learned from them.

> The experience of spending time in [name of small community] gave me a lot more confidence and made me see a lot more possibilities and made me realize that the world didn't work the way I thought it did, though part of why I went there was testing theories about the way the world worked….I started to reach out to try to understand more about things that I clearly didn't understand. So I just saw that [name of small community] taught me a whole lot of new things about going beyond myself and going beyond the borders of what was normal for me. Yes, it made me think differently.
>
> The part of this picture that's wrong is scale, because in scale I became very, very small, and I would like to situate this in the midst of a vast landscape, because one of the things that really impacts in the Arctic, especially when you

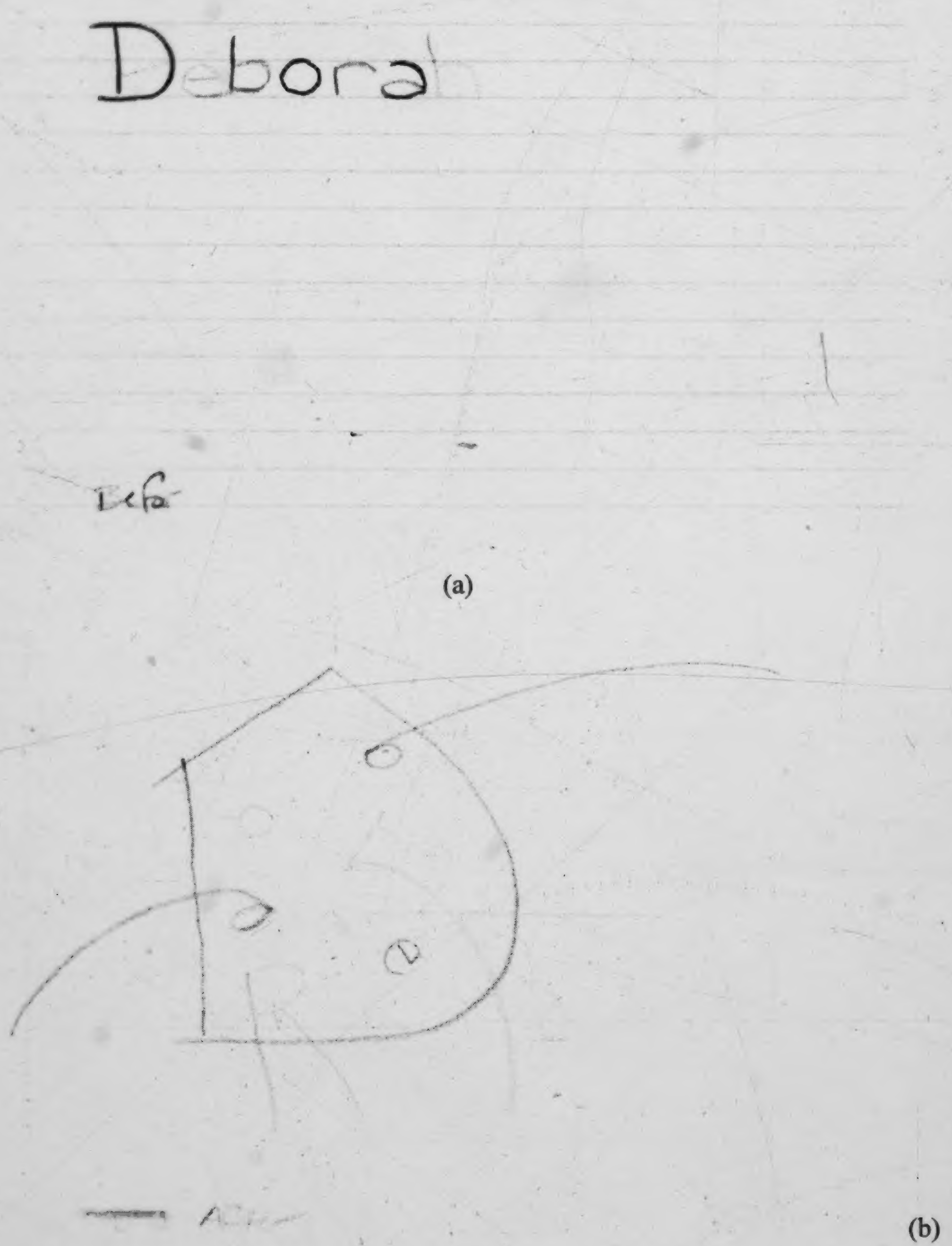

Debora
Befo
(a)
After
(b)

Figure 3. Name Drawings – Deborah

spend a lot of time out on the land, is just how very tiny and insignificant we are. So this should be a very, very tiny, happy little drawing.

Fluff

Fluff described her whole life as having been intercultural. Because of her father's job, her family moved every two or three years in northern Saskatchewan. One of the places that she lived as a teenager was a community very close to two reservations. Her father was active in the school board and in developing accessibility for youngsters from the reserve to come to the little town school. She saw this as political awareness teaching. In most of the communities she lived in, the majority of people who lived there were first generation Canadians from European countries. Her father had come from the United States to Canada as a grown man, so she was aware from a very early age of the multicultural reality of this continent.

Before she went to Nunavut, Fluff had training as a social worker and training in community development and sociology, as well as experience in different kinds of community and individual work. "I was always working…with Aboriginal people…in Ontario,…northern Manitoba,…Saskatchewan…and Churchill." Fluff explained with a smile, "I'm an older lady, so I have a lot of work experience."

Fluff went to Nunavut as a mental health specialist responsible for developing and managing a mental health program for Inuit. As Fluff understood it, the new program was to be directly accountable to the regional health board composed of Inuit representatives from each community. Fluff continued in her position for four years, until leaving Nunavut 10 years ago to return to southern Canada. She has since been employed as a mental health worker, doing program development work with Aboriginal communities and providing individual counselling to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients.

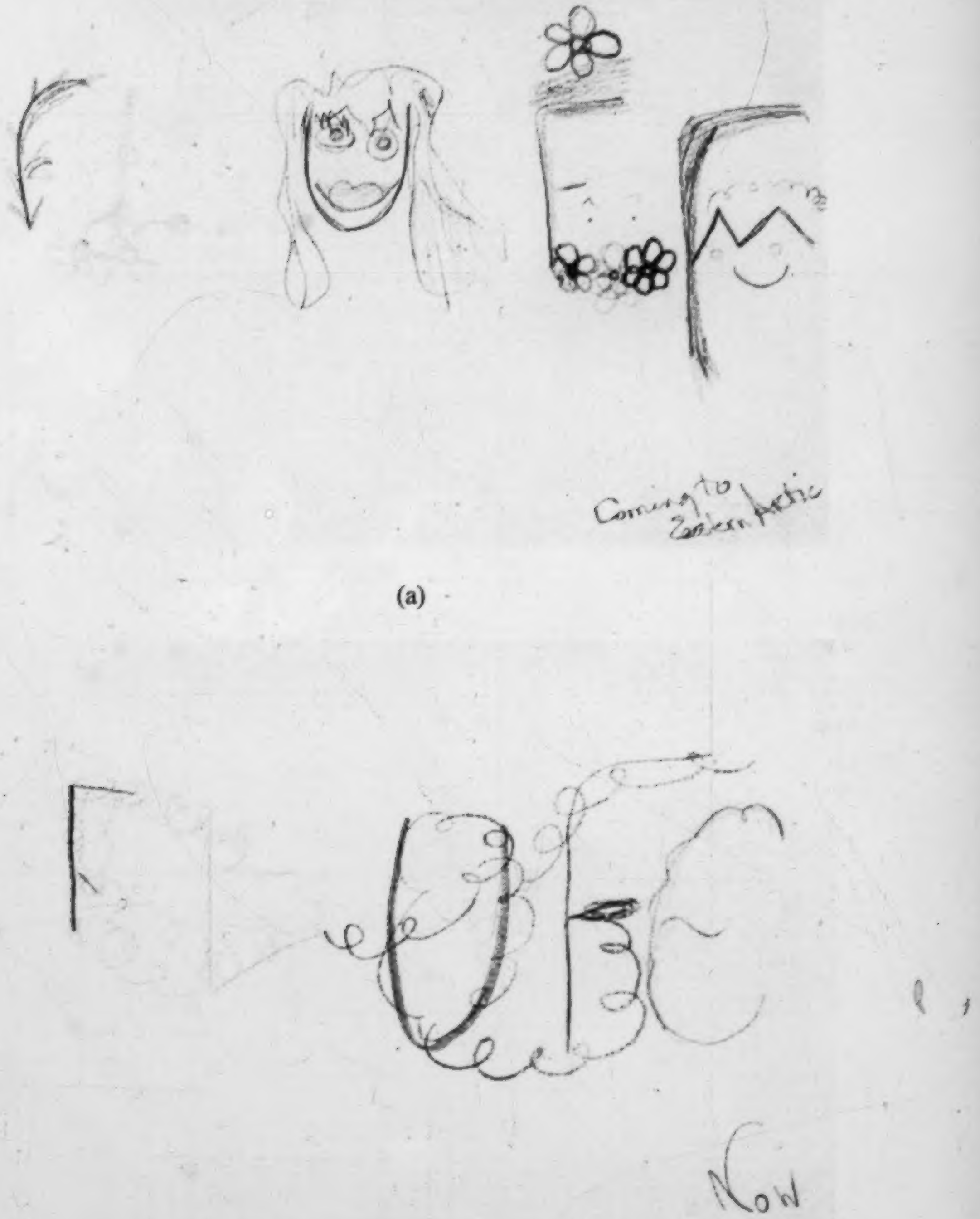
Fluff's wealth of life and work experience is reflected in her Before name drawing (Figure 4a). She saw herself as a kind of a busy, busy person. The different kinds of symbols show a lot of different places and work that she had done. She also symbolically depicted her littlest girl, who had died before Fluff moved to Nunavut, and her two daughters that were part of her existence at that time. She explained that the colours and…shapes represent her as a

> happy-go-lucky kind of person, enthusiastic, with lots of energy…different interests, different skills, sense of adventure…coming in a spirit of openness and genuine interest in where I was going, and seeing it as another adventure in getting to know people and a place, and being able to be of some use.

Her After drawing (Figure 4b) shows how Fluff saw herself after having been in southern Canada for about ten years. She explained, "I don't have a lot of the encumbrances that I had as a …a young single parent." She mentioned having a lot of interconnection in this drawing even though she lives in a much more isolating way in which work, family, and other interests are a little more separate. She noted that the letters seemed to be a little straighter. "The interconnections are interwoven but …the facets of them are a little more separate." She felt it still was kind of busy, still not simple.

Meeka

"When I look back, it's like I was always counselling," Meeka admitted with some surprise. Her initial reaction to being asked to participate in this research was that


Coming to Eastern Arctic
Now

(a)

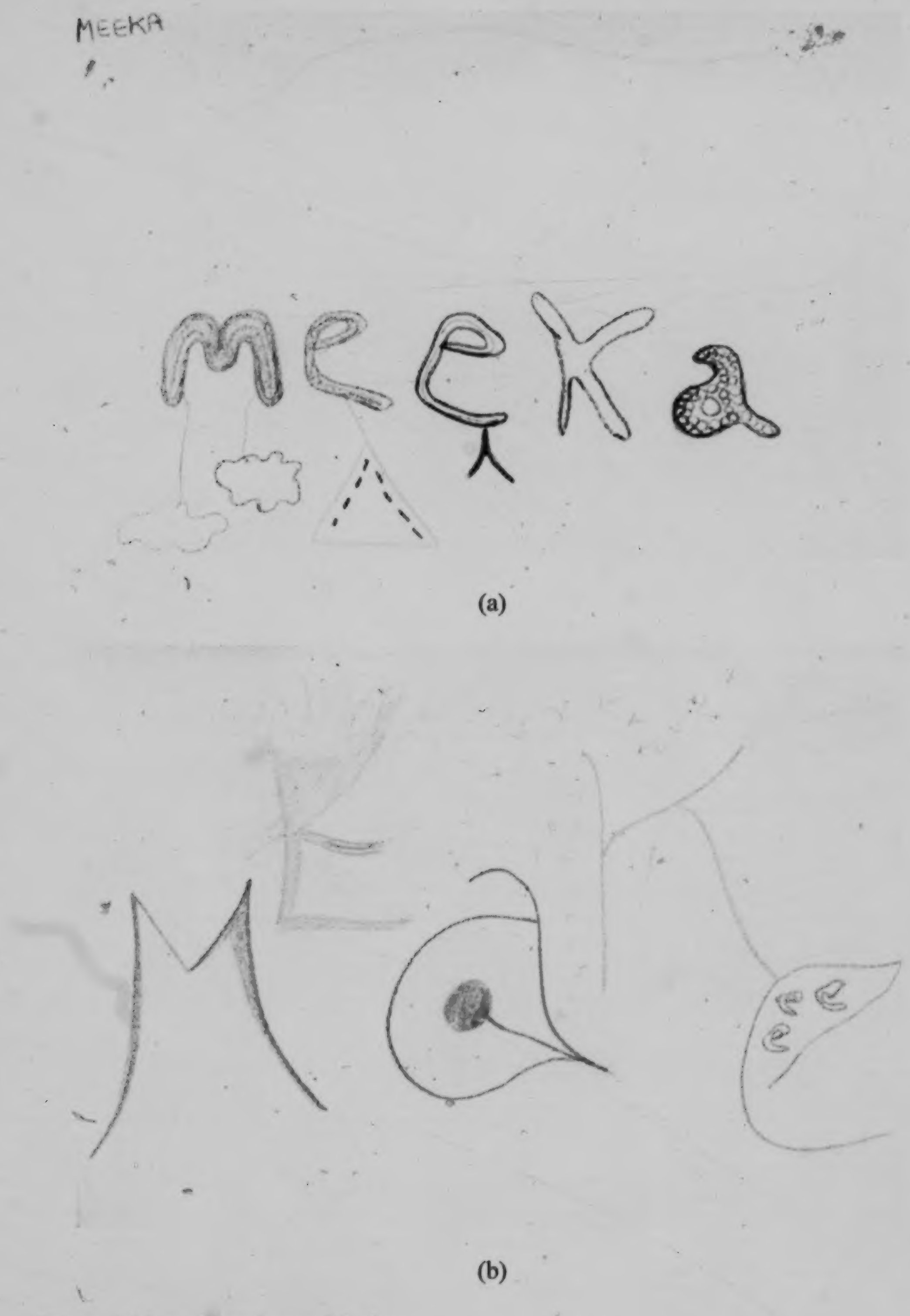
(b)

Figure 4. Name Drawings -- Fluff

she was never a counsellor. She explained, "I wasn't counselling. I was just listening." But being familiar with the very innovative counselling work she had done in Nunavut while serving as Director of a life skills program for street youth and while working in a school setting with behaviourally disturbed children, I asked her to give me an interview anyway. Since leaving Nunavut seven years ago, Meeka has been employed as a street worker, counselling Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth. She has also taken a Masters program in Educational Counselling. Reflecting on her Nunavut experience in light of her formal training, she realized, "It wasn't a big leap."

Because of her mother's work, Meeka had grown up in multicultural environments: "Being a minority kid in Churchill, Manitoba…living in Quebec…going to camps…for community groups or single parents." When her mother moved to Nunavut, Meeka was a university student, going up to the North for summer breaks. Her BEd program included multicultural teaching and she did a practicum at an alternate school for First Nations. On finishing her education degree, she re-located to Nunavut, and stayed there for several years after her family moved away.

Meeka is glad she had the opportunity spend 10 years of her young adulthood in Nunavut in a small community, learning about herself while still working and exploring and being given those opportunities. The personal growth that Meeka experienced is reflected in her Before and After Name Drawings. As she described her Before drawing (Figure 5a), "My Before drawing is in lower case, because I think when I moved up there I was influencible and I didn't really know…what I was doing. But at the same time—I filled most of the letters in, because" in the 20's, "it feels pretty full….Oh, I know. I've got it all figured out." She went on,


MEEKA
meeka

(a)

(b)

Figure 5. Name Drawings – Meeka

> And then I have things dangling off it….Dangling off this one was little clouds, like my ideals; and this one is…my values... And then dangling off this little lower case—and I made these kind of squiggly, like they're unformed…influencible….This K is influencible and so big. It's *"What?"* The huge what…What am I doing? What am I doing here? What should I be doing? What can I do? What's anyone else doing? I guess, because I picked a lot of jobs that weren't high paying, were high responsibility…working in different situations where no one else really understood what I was doing, not really even me. But I had somewhere to go every day, and it was a pleasant environment, and there was [sic] lots of people to interact with, and it felt positive, but what was it? And then I made this A sort of porous, like things coming and going out…And the colours, no significance other than I really like color.

Turning to her After drawing (Figure 5b), she said, "And this one is now: Where am I now? So I made these ones a mixture of larger-case letters, maybe giving the illusion or the reality of more self-confidence, more self-assurance. Not filled in. In fact, acknowledging that there are spaces around or outside or floating."

Contrasting her Before and After drawings she explained,

> [Before] I was the priority. And this one [After], I'm just something in a vast array of nature….I picked green and blue for nature-type colours….One thing I did is, I spelled it wrong, where I just mixed up two letters, and it's not a big deal, which I also found interesting, because maybe now I'm more flexible….So the "a" could have gone there. So I drew it dot, dot, dot, right? It doesn't really matter where it goes. All the letters are kind of there; who cares? Not that concerned now

with how things should be or where—yes, the organizational structure or what anyone else thinks: "Oh, she spelled her name wrong." That might upset some people, but I thought it was very telling.

This E has a darker colour, and this A has a darker colour….I'm currently doing a master's in educational counseling, and I never thought I'd be here….You just find your place often in weird places. But I…put two little solids in there, and often during my navel gazing or self-reflection or whatever it is you have to do to get through the program, there's a lot of… retrospective grief….Knowing now what I know, there's situations or individuals or memories that I have of when I was *this* person in *this* world, and I guess I carry some of that along with me, and I'm always like, "Oh! It's like that. Oh, if I knew *then* what I know now, what different things could I have done?" So maybe some responsibility in some way, so I continue to carry that….It kind of leaks out slowly. So around this one and around this one I added color, meaning it's still alive, it's still going, it's still ever changing and evolving.

And so then there's my K, and it's a very busy K. When I drew these [indicating protrusions on the K] I couldn't decide if they were similar to this [indicating K in Figure 5a]….What does this all mean? …It's quite complicated, so it could be maybe a protective barrier….It could be thorns, or it could be what else is out there, like little antennas that are kind of on high alert, sucking it all in, absorbing it. Or it could be half and half; I'm not sure about that one. And this E, which is in the wrong place…has lots of little Es in it, and I guess that's more my internal thinking and evolving and growing and processing.

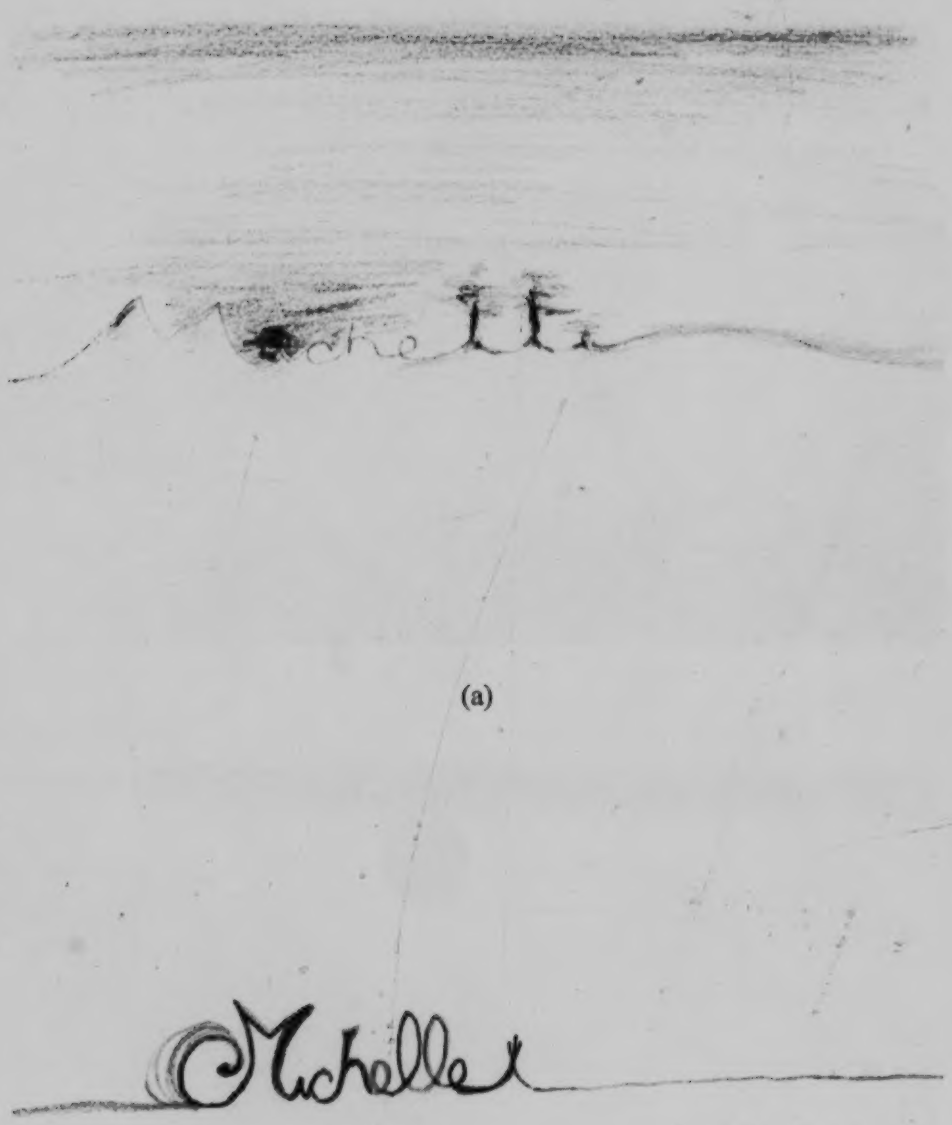
Michelle

Michelle was a young, newly graduated social worker when she went to Nunavut. She had completed her BSW, with an academic focus on policy, community development, and theory. After she graduated, she had been doing a research project with a professor for a couple of months and traveling in Europe. The opportunity in Nunavut as a community mental health worker was her first real social work job and her first direct experience working with another culture. When talking about why she went to Nunavut, Michelle said, "Probably the main reason I went was because my sister used to work up there, and so I…went looking for her." Michelle's sister, who had died at the age of thirty-one, had spent most of her life working as a social worker in the Arctic.

Michelle remained in Nunavut for four years, returning to southern Canada approximately eight years ago. Since her return, she has held a variety of social work positions and pursued advanced training in psychodrama. She is currently maintaining a private counselling practice working on Aboriginal reserves.

In her Before Nunavut name drawing (Figure 6a), Michelle tried to show her feelings about herself at that time. "I felt unknown and elusive.…I think what drew me to the North was the land.…If anything was solid, it was the landscape and my connection to it. The sky – big…"

When describing her After Nunavut drawing, (Figure 6b) showing how four years in Nunavut had changed her perception of herself, Michelle explained,


Michelle
Michelle

(a)

(b)

Figure 6. Name Drawings – Michelle

> I guess I felt more known. I felt …crisper or more defined at least…in my connection to the land. I was so drawn to [the prairies] after I left. I just spent hours…outside.…It was a self-discovery for me. So I'm not sure what else I can say specifically about who I was after, because in many ways, I was exhausted, too. I was exhausted and again, sort of elusive. I just felt very burnt out, but also excited.…I think that's what the colour's about: excited about doing something else and exploring where I'm from. Having more of a curiosity about who I am and my culture and my place.

Patricia

Patricia was cleaning the pool when I arrived at her elegant suburban home where her family has lived in the year since returning from Nunavut -- the house with a garden and flowers that her daughter had asked for. We sat in the gazebo, shaded from the early summer sun and surrounded by bird song. The setting seemed to serve as a wordless counterpoint to Patricia's description of the four years her family spent in Nunavut.

Before moving to Nunavut, Patricia had completed her MSW at McGill, with coursework in multicultural counselling. She also had two years of experience working with the Mi'qmaq people in Nova Scotia. She felt that was quite different than her experience in Nunavut because she was in the reserve office only one day a week. When she and her family went to Nunavut, Patricia laughingly explained, "We lived with everybody the same way they were living and had the same bad fruit and vegetables and poor milk."

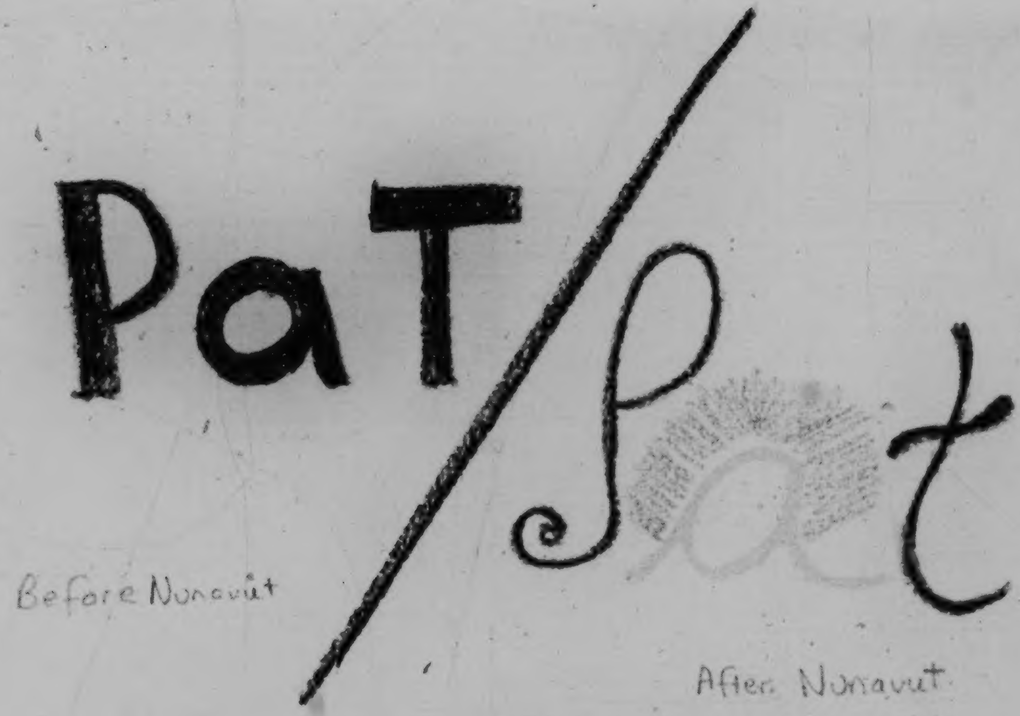
Going north was something that she and her husband, an RCMP officer, had always talked about doing. The opportunity for a transfer to Nunavut came unexpectedly.

As Patricia described it, "At the time, we had a twenty month old." Because the posting would require a four-year commitment, they thought, "Well, if we do it, we have to do it now." Patricia was concerned about the school system in the North and wanted to be finished their stint before her oldest child would be school-aged. From the time her husband put his name in for a transfer to the time they were physically in Nunavut, it was five-and-a-half weeks. As Patricia remembered this abrupt transition, "So sell the house, put all the stuff in storage, pack up, go!"

Despite the sudden re-location, Patricia expressed the feeling that her family's sojourn in Nunavut was a time when a lot of good things happened. Her drawing of her name Before and After living in Nunavut reflects the positive changes she experienced through her work as social worker in a regional centre and a Community Wellness Co-ordinator in a much smaller community. As Patricia described how she saw herself Before going to Nunavut (Figure 7a):

> I was much more rigid, much more things had to be done a certain way and didn't deviate from day to day too, too much. A little duller…I had done a whole lot of really different things, but nothing that really…stood out…as being unusual.

Patricia drew her After name (Figure 7b) as more flowing, more fluid. "In the North you've got to be flexible, you've got to be fluid, you've got to go with the flow….You've just got to be there when it's happening." As she explained the brighter choice of colours in her *After* name, "I became a little more colourful because I allowed myself to be different and to accept that….The colours reflect a little bit more life." She drew the "sunshine [around the 'a'] "because it was so enlightening." Summing up the difference in her drawings, she said, "I grew a lot. I learned a lot."



(a) (b)

Figure 7. Name Drawings - Patricia

Patricia retains ties with Nunavut, returning there on a regular basis to provide intensive group counselling sessions for Inuit survivors of child sexual abuse. She is also employed part-time with an Employee Assistance firm, where she has some immigrants among her clientele.

Rebecca

Rebecca is a lean, athletic and energetic young woman. In the spirit of *Nunavummiut* [people who live in Nunavut], she welcomed me to her home with tea and cookies. During our interview, she appeared to be poised, mindful, and good-humoured. She paused with an air of detached thoughtfulness before answering questions and punctuated her comments with gusts of laughter and animated gestures of her slender hands.

Rebecca was raised and educated in a large prairie city. After completing an undergraduate degree, she traveled for six months in South America and taught English —her first cross-cultural experience. While working on a two-year BSW program, she did course work in multicultural social work practice. She had placement and practicum experiences that involved her with families from a variety of backgrounds. But she wanted something more.

"I had been impacted by going to South America and being in a different environment and wanted that again," she explained. The idea of going north struck a romantic chord. "It just seemed like such an unreal place." Throughout the second year of her program, she brought a northern angle into her assignments and papers whenever she had the opportunity. After graduation, Rebecca was hired to work in a small Nunavut community, her first gig as a social worker. She was sent into an isolated settlement after a crash course in how to be a probation officer, how to be a child protection worker, and all the rest of it all crammed in. Rebecca worked in the community for two years.

Rebecca entered a Masters of Social Work program on returning from Nunavut, and went back to a different Nunavut community for several months to conduct her thesis research. Two years after leaving her social work job in Nunavut, she said, "I'm very, very ambivalent about the whole thing." She elaborated, "I'll always have very fond memories and I'll always have very terrible memories of living and working in that community. But I feel very, very fortunate to have had the experience, and I think overall it's been really enriching."

As mentioned earlier, Rebecca did not feel comfortable about completing the Before and After name drawing exercise. In lieu of a name drawing, Rebecca gave permission for me to use this piece of *found poetry* (Butler-Kisber, 1998), which I adapted from her Master's thesis (Harckham, 2003). In it, she expressed the sense of having been profoundly touched by her Nunavut sojourn.

> I glanced
> at the gently undulating earth, the enormous sky,
> felt the bite of the wind at my fingers
> and on my face…
> The land is no relic,
> it is an active scene
> of both life and death,
> but standing
> out there
> I felt a sense of awe and antiquity
> that far outreached
> anything
> I have ever felt
> standing
> in a museum.
> (adapted from Harckham, 2003, p. 83)

Rebecca is now employed as a social worker in a drug and alcohol counselling centre. She has some Aboriginal clients on her caseload.

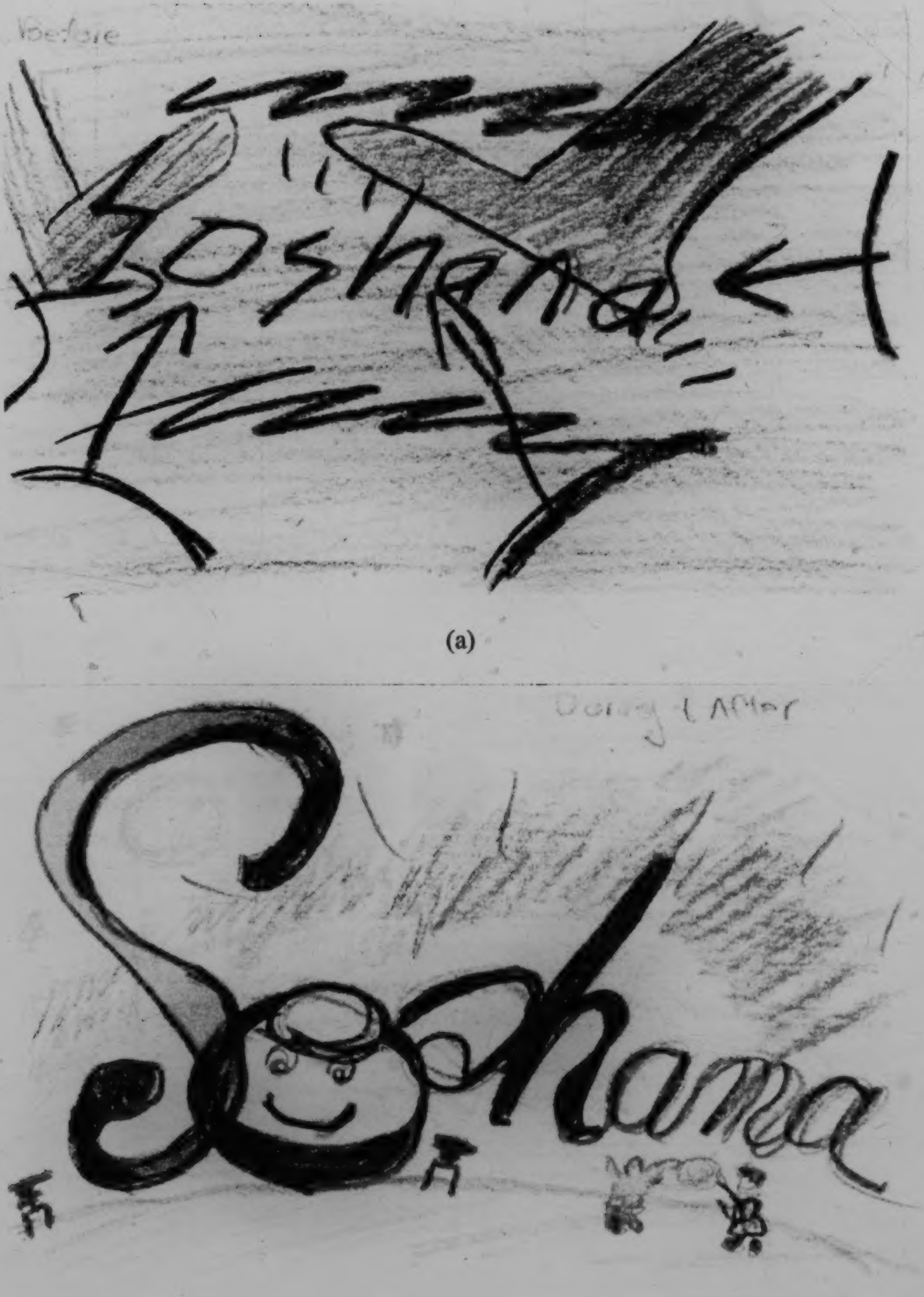
Soshana

Her four years in Nunavut Territory were not Soshana's first cross-cultural experience. She had grown up with Native kids in the northern area of a province, and lived for a time in multi-cultural group homes, located in ethnically diverse urban areas. Training in cross-cultural psychology and how to work with oppressed people was an integral part of her Master's program. Soshana had taken graduate training in community psychology because she always had a spirit of adventure and she liked the cold. She figured, "If I get training for remote areas, especially remote, cold northern areas, I would always have a job." She always wanted to go some place remote where she would feel safe from her abusive family and where she could be a pioneer.

Soshana got a job in Nunavut as a community mental health specialist by answering an ad in the Globe and Mail. She counselled there for about four years, and returned to southern Canada about nine years ago. Since returning, she was employed as a community mental health worker in the northern part of a province and had extensive contact with Aboriginal clients. At the time of our interview, she was working on a doctorate in sociology, with the hope of returning North, as well as maintaining a private counselling practice for clients with abusive histories.

In the Arctic, Soshana found "a sense of kinship" that she had never experienced in southern Canada. "In our society here in the South, I always had the worst story in the room, so I…felt stigmatized," explained Soshana, as she told me about the Before and During/After drawings of her name.

The dark Before drawing (Figure 8a), with its sense of conflict and tension, represents the turmoil in Soshana's life before going to Nunavut "I was really broke


Before
Soshana
During & After
Soshana

(a)

(b)

Figure 8. Name Drawings -- Soshana

when I was doing my master's degree....I come from a really abusive family so I had to support myself, and I literally starved....I felt like my spirit was being crushed because I was so poor." Soshana went on to describe the significance of the arrows in her picture, "I had to be aware all the time of problems related to my abusive family....I had to keep changing my address and moving because they were alcoholics and just crazy, crazy people....My spirit was strong but...I felt really oppressed."

Soshana's positive feelings about her Nunavut experience shine in the bright colours of her During/After picture (Figure 8b). "I just fit with the Inuit like a hand in a glove because they had stories just as bad as me, if not worse, and I didn't feel the stigmatized person any more....I just felt welcomed, " Soshana said in explanation. "See how colourful my name got and I'm happy....The multi-colour of lights was just my ability to transform and adapt to those surroundings....My strong spirit...just blossomed and grew."

Portrayals of Change and Growth

In their Name Drawings and/or introductory narratives, all of the participants depicted themselves as significantly different after the Nunavut sojourn. As Fluff later remarked, "One has this...awareness of how one's self is being changed...very profound changing." In the Name Drawings of those who completed the Before and After exercise, several themes are apparent concerning the types of changes the participants saw themselves as experiencing.

Increased Flow and Connectedness

In the drawings of Danya, Fluff, Pat and Soshana, their images of themselves Before were conveyed in block letters. The block letters represent a sense of being conventionally professional before going to Nunavut, with definite boundaries. In their After drawings, Danya, Pat and Soshana chose cursive script to represent the sense of flow and connectedness they developed in Nunavut while Fluff used curly lines to link the letters in her After drawing to represent feeling connected. In their introductory narratives, the participants described a sense of greater interconnectedness between the personal and professional aspects of their lives.

Incorporating Nature

Most of the participants incorporated features of the natural environment into their After Nunavut Name Drawings, indicating an increased sense of connectedness with the Land. Bev drew herself as a tree, with roots deep in the Land; Deborah described herself as very small and embedded in a vast landscape; Meeka used the nature colours of green and blue; Michelle showed herself as emerging between the sea and the land; Patricia embellished her "a" with the rays of the sun; and Soshana surrounded her name with the rays of the aurora borealis. Debbie and Rebecca, the two participants who did not complete Before and After drawings, also described finding something personally meaningful in their encounters with the wild vastness of the Arctic.

Change in Size

Many of the participants drew their After names as visibly larger than their Before names. This increase is noticeable in the drawings of Bev, Danya, Deborah, Meeka, Pat and Soshana. The change in size reflects the sense of personal and professional growth that the participants expressed in their introductory narratives. They felt they had been enriched by their experiences in Nunavut and become more confident.

Colour Changes

Several of the participants portrayed themselves as more colourful and lively after their Nunavut sojourn, reflecting the increased openness to different experiences, increased awareness of diverse worldviews, and increased sense of the multifaceted nature of the world they described in their introductory narratives. Pat's and Soshana's After drawings showed colourful elaborations to the letters of their names, in contrast to the simple lines and somber colours of their Before drawings. Michelle, too, went from using monochromatic script to show herself Before to using a burst of rainbow colours in the script of her After name, to depict her sense of becoming clearer about her identity. The cool blues and greens of Deborah's Before name contrast with the energy of the vivid reds, oranges and purples of her After name. Danya, however, chose to use more subdued colours in her After name then in her Before name, to reflect a loss of optimism she experienced in Nunavut.

Rearrangement

Deborah and Meeka both further used a re-arrangement of the letters of their names to show how dramatically Nunavut had affected their understanding of the world In Deborah's Before drawing, her name is printed in simple, almost childish block letters, while in her After drawing, the letters themselves are a mixture of sizes and scripts, not printed in an orderly way but scrambled within one large *D*. Meeka went from using lower-case block letters printed in a straight line to using a mixture of upper and lower case letters, scattered on the page. Bev's series of drawings also conveyed this sense of having her thoughts and feelings re-arranged by her Nunavut experience. Her After drawing was much more complex and detailed than her Before drawing, while her series of *During* drawings showed a process of both expansion, disintegration and reintegration. As these participants described in their introductory narratives, the Nunavut experience unsettled their existing thoughts and feelings about the world, and opened them to very different perspectives.

Summary

"How do sojourning counsellors make meaning of a cross-cultural immersion experience?" is one of the primary research questions for this dissertation. The participants' introductory drawings and narratives indicated that changes in their self-perceptions occurred through the sojourning experience. The participants saw themselves as having become more connected to other people and to nature, as having grown personally and professionally, as having become more colourful and aware of diverse ways of looking at the world. They described themselves as aware of how much their ways of thinking and feeling had changed during their Nunavut sojourns.

How did the participants account for the remarkable changes they portrayed in their Name Drawings and introductory narratives? As described in the preceding Process of Inquiry chapter, analysis of their extended narratives identified *Learning* as the major unifying theme the participants used to make meaning of the changes they experienced through their Nunavut sojourn. Succeeding chapters present detailed analysis of different aspects of the participants' learning.

V. LEARNING HOW TO LEARN

"How do sojourning counsellors make meaning of their experience?" was one of the major research questions in this study. As discussed in the Process of Inquiry chapter, *Learning* emerged as the theme all the participants used in narrating their experiences. This chapter presents the participants' insights into how they learned during their sojourns. Following chapters deepen our understanding of the participants' learning, analyzing it in terms of what they learned about the Nunavut context, what they learned about being a multicultural counsellor, and how they are using what they learned since returning from Nunavut.

In their narratives of their Nunavut sojourns, the participants provided meaningful insights into how their learning occurred. As a major theme, all the participants made particular reference to having an "open mind" or not making "assumptions" as being important to their learning. Other major themes are the participants' discussion of the systematic approaches they took to learning how to live and work in a new culture and their descriptions of specific incidents or kinds of experiences that led to learning, which demonstrated a metacognitive awareness of how to learn a new culture. Beyond that, some of the participants articulated a deeper metacognitive awareness of how their perceptions, thought processes and feelings changed during their sojourns.

Keeping an Open Mind

Phrases such as "keeping an open mind", "being open", and "not making assumptions" appear in the narratives of all the participants. They appeared to see this openness as a necessary state of mind, a prerequisite for learning about a new culture. Beyond this strong consensus, the participants' narratives highlighted several different dimensions of the meaning of being open. Further, in their descriptions of the different approaches they took to being open, the participants provided specific guidance on cultivating an open mind.

Building a New Framework

In learning any new culture, Debbie felt the most important thing is to try to build a new framework to hang the experiences on, which she saw not as a process of transformation of an older framework but as building something very different from the bottom up. During the interview for her job in Nunavut, she was asked, "Do you think that your experience in northern Alberta is going to be of use to you here?" As Debbie remembered:

> I said, "No, it isn't. There's nothing that's the same here. This is a totally different culture." As I went through, as I grew, I realized that it *is* a very different culture from what I had been working in, and that taught me a really valuable lesson. That everywhere you go, cultures are different.

Making No Assumptions

On moving to Nunavut, Deborah explained,

> I went with the assumption that I really knew nothing.…One of my just flippant little phrases about…the meaning of life…comes from *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*…and there's a line…about "in an infinite universe there's an infinite number of possibilities. Anything you think is almost certain to be wrong."

Michelle described discussing the Inuit people's needs with her supervisor and asking, "What are the assumptions we're making?" Patricia also emphasized, "You can't make assumptions."

Listening

Fluff pointed out the need to "learn to listen very, very carefully, learn to keep one's eyes and ears and one's heart very open." Rebecca, too, felt that really listening to what people were saying was important. Debbie also commented that "not to talk, but to listen" was the way to learn.

Being Humbled by Inevitable Mistakes

Despite her openness and prior cross-cultural experience, Deborah said that before going to Nunavut, "I had never made such obvious mistakes." Deborah emphasized the importance of having "the ability to recognize and recover from mistakes in a culturally appropriate way." Reflecting on her mistakes, Deborah said, "I think making mistakes is inevitable. It's also a good thing when you learn from it. And it's humbling, and I think it's good to be humbled."

Not Being Right

Soshana characterized her approach this way: "What you need is…a willingness to not always be right, and a willingness to just put aside your need to be right, in order to attend to other people's points of view." Similarly, Danya commented on having to be open to people telling her, "That's not okay, and that doesn't make sense for us." Rebecca also observed, "You think you have something worked out, and then you'd have to go back and revisit it."

Approaching Cultural Learning Systematically

Several of the participants provided extended descriptions about systematic approaches they had taken to learning about the Inuit culture and the Nunavut context. In their narratives, a number of different strategies were apparent: immersion in Inuit culture, being mentored by Inuit and/or non-Inuit, reflection, and research.

Immersing Themselves in Inuit Culture

Compared to their lives in southern Canada, all of these participants were immersed in a different cultural milieu. All of the participants worked professionally with Inuit clients. But beyond that, they all sought involvement with Inuit culture outside their professional responsibilities. A few of them had non-professional contact with Inuit before assuming a counselling role. Most described socializing with Inuit friends, or having contact from participating in the life of a small community. More specific strategies described included attending cultural events and listening to stories.

Immersion Preceding Professional Contact

Both Bev and Meeka had extensive contact with Inuit culture before moving into a professional counselling role. For Bev, what started as an effort to learn Inuktitut led to marriage with an Inuk. Her consequent long sojourn in Nunavut gave her the most extensive and intensive immersion experience of all the participants. Bev taught in the elementary school for several years and then became a Program Support teacher. "All the kids in grief, all the kids in trauma were passed on." As a teacher involved in the community, able to talk to the parents and kids in Inuktitut, she knew the background to the problems.

Meeka also sought contact with Inuit culture before she moved into a counselling role. Meeka's name is a common name for Inuit women. She thought having her name gave her a "little ticket in" to Inuit culture. Once she graduated from her BEd, she worked for many months at a day care with an Inuit woman who had had TB and been sent down South for years and years and had missed her children growing up. "That's living history! Things you've heard about but didn't necessarily know people…" who had those experiences. "Then you felt the influence that …had on …generational relationships." Her favourite job ever was as a bus driver for two years. She reminisced fondly, "All the kids that took the bus were Inuit, so we just sang Inuktitut versions of 'You are my sunshine' and all the kind of good, fun stuff." Meeka also dated an Inuit fellow. As she described that experience:

> I attended all the feasts and really got into…Inuit dancing…and just participated in the community completely…like getting invited to little tents and making bannock and going for weekends with…local families.

Michelle wished that she had come to Nunavut in a non-professional capacity, as Meeka had. She remarked,

> In some ways I really wish I would have been there working for CBC or just being a janitor in the hospital, just to have a different experience of people, because there's really kind of a wall when you are a mental health worker, and people relate to you differently.

Social Activities Outside of Professional Roles

Many of the participants talked about socializing with Inuit, outside of their professional roles. For many of the participants this involved spending time on the Land with Inuit. As Michelle remembered, "Those were always beautiful experiences, being in a boat with some local people and watching wildlife and discovering seals and walruses or shooting at icebergs so we could have water for tea."

Patricia described how she actively sought contact with Inuit.

> One of the things I found really valuable…was to really get to know some people who were Inuit, not just live among them, but be with them and do some of the things that I wouldn't ever have thought I would have done before I left: go out camping, go in a *komatiq* [Inuktitut word for sled pulled behind a ski-doo or dog team], go to the floe edge with my baby on my back.

Rebecca had two close friends in the community who are Inuit; she still keeps in regular contact with one of them. Unlike many Nunavut sojourners who go South during holiday periods, she spent a whole year without leaving the North at all. She went camping on the Land a few times with families, and stayed for a time at an outpost camp during her vacation. She cherishes these times, very playful and kind of teasing and lighthearted, when she was able to relax and laugh and break out of the more serious job role.

Soshana also alluded to having Inuit visit at her house and remembered her trips with Inuit out on the Land: "They'd take me out to their camps and everything, and I learned how to dry fish….They taught me a lot of those really good basic skills."

Unlike the other participants, Debbie doesn't like the cold, so she didn't go camping or do any of the traditional things. Instead, her students were always welcome to come to her home and drink endless cups of tea. She visited, sewed parkas, and knitted, most of the time with the women, although the men were always welcome to come over.

Having Children in the Community

Deborah described how having a child immersed her in the life of the community. "Just because of the nature of the lifestyle and the community, my home became a very central part of my existence. It was always filled with hordes of thundering kids."

Patricia, too, felt that having children really helped "because they love kids in Nunavut." She really tried be part of the community. "I went to the feasts; I went to the graduations….My kids went to the day care right in town."

Listening to Stories

During a summer job as a day camp co-ordinator, Meeka used to go over to the Elders' facility and listen to stories. She remembered, "I was just getting old enough to appreciate them but it really showed me the historical differences, the cultural differences."

Deborah described learning a lot from Inuit friends "often just from saying 'Tell me a story'…which in Inuit culture is really appropriate". Michelle also learned from listening to Inuit stories, recalling, "I just *love* hearing the stories of hunting….One of the guys that I was friends with would tell me that his favourite meal was to get a caribou and have some of its brain with Ritz crackers…It's a delicacy."

Attending Cultural Events

Danya described going to a lot of events to learn about Inuit culture when she and her husband arrived in Nunavut. As she remembered, "I'd go to the dances. I'd go to some of the food festivals. I tried seal…a lot of raw meats…the raw fishes and stuff like that."

Learning the Language

Bev is the only participant who became fluently bilingual in Inuktitut. The other participants, with the exception of Danya, described trying to learn some Inuktitut. According to Deborah, "Even learning just the basics of the language is such an eye opener to how people think." She saw willingness to learn the language as an important indicator of openness and effort. She qualified that by adding, "Not necessarily success at learning a language."

Meeka picked up some Inuktitut when she worked at a day care. She commented, "I can talk to a four year old like you wouldn't believe." Later, she learned how to read Inuktitut phonetically and write it although she had no idea what she was reading. Meeka felt, "Even that built great rapport with the entire community."

Soshana did not learn to speak Inuktitut but the Inuit insisted she understood it. They would ask her "Well, what do you think we've been talking about?" When she would say what she thought she understood, they would say, "You just said it word for word."

Being Mentored

Developing a mentoring relationship with an Inuit colleague or friend or with a more experienced non-Inuit colleague or friend was featured in the narratives of many participants. As described by the participants, such relationships were distinct from ordinary friendships or casual acquaintances in providing the participants with on-going advice and support while learning to live and work with another culture.

Inuit Mentors

Deborah offered the most detailed narrative of being mentored by an Inuk colleague. She explained how in every posting she has had she forms a really good relationship, often with an interpreter, and relies on that person to interpret much more than words. In Nunavut, Deborah described becoming very close friends with an Inuit woman who worked for the government. Deborah recalled, "There were lots of taboos initially in the first year. There was stuff I just wouldn't get an answer to…'not an appropriate question'….But as we got to know each other better, I just learned more."

Although Fluff did not describe forming a specific mentoring relationship, she observed that her interchanges with Inuit colleagues and the Elders she worked with had a significant effect on her. Fluff remarked, "Sometimes I would become aware of how not only was the helping and the teaching and the counseling mutual but of how that all was changing me."

Rebecca felt very fortunate to have the two women friends whom she could ask a lot of questions and who gave her the opportunity to express it if there was something she didn't understand. She commented, "Sometimes I got answers and sometimes I didn't."

Patricia, who had been working in isolation, benefited when she gained a professional colleague who was Inuit and had about 17 years experience in social work. Patricia found her a real breath of fresh air and described it as "really helpful" to have someone she could bounce things off of professionally.

Non-Inuit Mentors

Patricia offered an extensive narrative of being mentored by non-Inuit with longer sojourning experiences. She described feeling "a natural gravitational pull towards other White people in the community" when she first arrived in Nunavut because she felt a little uncomfortable and wasn't really sure what she was doing. She observed, "There is a major tendency for people to …hang together, us against them." Patricia had the feeling that other White people could teach her. What she found is: "Some of them can be really good teachers, and others just want to impose their negativism." She was much more comfortable once she was able to pick and choose the people of the same race she wanted to spend time with.

To check her impressions of the community, Patricia spoke a lot with another woman who had been in the North for fourteen years and seemed to have blended the South and the North really well. For example, when Patricia had been there for about nine months, the community had a rash of attempted suicides by shooting and two of them succeeded. "The community seemed to be in a real downward spiral." Patricia observed that because of her husband's work and her own, "We didn't always…see the best pieces of the community." So Patricia checked with her more experienced friend "Has this…always been here, and I've been blind to it? Or am I seeing a real change in the community?" Her friend had said, "You're right, it is in a downward spiral….There's an anxiety in the community that hasn't been here in a long time." In her friend's experience, every four or five years communities go through a bad time for a year or two, and then pull themselves out of it and make some changes.

Patricia also went a lot to another non-Inuit woman who worked in the same office building, who had been born and raised in Nunavut. Patricia would explain, "Okay this is what happened, and this, this, this, this." This woman explained a lot of the social behaviour to Patricia. It was very important to Patricia to find somebody she could trust to give her the right information at the right time in terms of the how-tos and what was acceptable and what was not acceptable.

Like Patricia, Michelle had a mentor from her own culture in a senior mental health specialist, who was always supervising, always consulting. Without that support, Michelle said, "There's no way I could have been there and done what I did. It would have been impossible....We always had this ongoing fascinating conversation about what we were doing: the ethics, the dynamics, the culture."

In every community that she visited, Soshana always had one person she could talk with and de-brief with about the personal and professional "stuff" she was going through. "Sometimes it was a nurse at the nursing station, sometimes the wife of the Anglican minister."

Reflecting

Several of the participants described actively reflecting on their experiences. Although this kind of questioning reflection appears implicitly in the mentoring relationships described earlier, some participants made explicit reference to using reflective strategies.

Danya regularly called a close friend and fellow psychologist in the South to "de-brief" her Nunavut experiences. Danya also remembered discussing Nunavut with other sojourners. Because many of the Southerners did not have a family up there, they would all get together and have conversations. "How do you make things different? How do you make changes? How do you help them make changes? Of course, as a Southerner...how do we know what's best for a different group of people?" Danya's intensive reflection continued after her return from Nunavut. She suffered a clinical depression, and her psychologist suggested, "You're not letting go, and maybe you need to write about it." So Danya got a little tape recorder and started to organize her memories, which did help.

Fluff reported having a systematic process for reflecting on what she was learning. As she described it, "I'm not a counsellor for nothing. Talk, talk, talk, talk, talk....I'm a great journal writer and talker."

To help her process her new experiences, Meeka also adopted some deliberate strategies:

> I wrote a lot…and by talking, by asking a lot of questions, even really dumb ones, in safe environments, and then not accepting one answer. So…somebody non-Inuit who'd been there for ten years, I'd ask them, sort of mull over that response, then ask someone at work in an unassuming way…a born-and-raised Inuk…the same question and…seeing the two different answers and then comparing.

Meeka was clear that her reflection process was only partially successful. "Some stuff I just didn't understand. My then-boyfriend's mother who was Inuit, I didn't understand some of the laws that she would say: 'Well, that's *that* family.' …I didn't know how to process a lot of that stuff."

Rebecca's reflection on her experiences continued with the Northern Studies group that formed during her MSW program. She commented, "I needed to talk about a lot of things….And your friends get bored and your family gets bored." Having a peer group with similar experiences and interests was a great support. They were all really interested in wrestling out some of the meanings of their Northern experience.

Researching

The participants were well-educated women, many with Master's level training. Only a few of them, however, referred to reading or studying about Inuit culture in any kind of formal academic way as part of their learning process.

Rebecca differed from the other participants in that she incorporated a northern theme into the papers she was doing for her BSW program. Once in Nunavut, she continued the reading of Northern literature she had begun during her social work program, including books of Inuit poetry and stories. After leaving Nunavut, Rebecca, other social work students with northern experience and a professor who does research in the North formed a Northern Studies group. Together, they examined literature on the cultural effects of colonialism and northern social work practice, relating it to their personal experiences. Rebecca also made mental health issues in Nunavut the focus of her Master's thesis, spending two months in a different Nunavut community to collect her data. She felt it was a really good experience to go to a different community. "I thought that I had more knowledge than I did, because you get a little bit smug." Finding that there were a lot more differences than she expected was a rude awakening.

Deborah remarked that with every new international posting, she reads about the culture before going. So before going to Nunavut, she remembered, "I'd read a lot about Inuit culture before I went there....I just immersed myself and studied a lot." Some of her reading was particularly helpful in the child custody aspect of her job as a social worker by giving her an awareness of what to expect from kids and how kids relate to adults. She explained:

> I had read a study out of McGill University...on why Inuit children do badly in school....What this woman had written her thesis on was the conflict between traditional Inuit values and the values of the Canadian education system and the fact that these two sets of values are complete opposites. For a child to be good in Inuit terms, they don't ask questions, they don't speak directly to adults, they're quiet, they learn by watching, they're not big headed, they never say "I know" or volunteer an opinion. Kids don't do that. So a really model child is quiet, self-effacing, sits in the background, observes, says nothing, never volunteers an

opinion. And then they go off to school and fail miserably because the teachers are wanting them to be bad. That made such an impression on me. And they had interviews with Inuit parents saying, "They want to teach my child to speak, to offer an opinion, and this is wrong. They're teaching our kids to be rude."

Deborah described how she applied this information on her arrival in Nunavut. "I was presented with child welfare investigation protocols that had me asking direct questions to a frightened child." She laughed as she remembered thinking, "Hello! I think this is set up for failure."

In contrast to Deborah and Rebecca, Soshana was emphatic about not reading anything about Inuit culture before she went. "It's all written by White people anyway." Instead, Soshana did her own research. She based her work in Nunavut communities on this idea: "Given the appropriate knowledge, they can solve most of their own psychological problems and issues." Her initial approach was systematically to ask the different community groups what they felt the needs of their community were and what they wanted. As Soshana described this process, "They kept saying, 'You tell us'." Soshana would say, "You tell me. 'No, you tell us.' No, you tell me. And this went on for a year." Soshana eventually published a scholarly article on her findings on how to work effectively with Inuit communities, although to keep her identity confidential, she asked me not to provide the citation.

Moments of Meaning

Many of the participants described incidents or encounters that led to spontaneous changes in their understanding of Inuit culture. In recounting these incidents, the participants described how they had learned because of an Inuit response to their behaviour or opinions. Although the learning resulted from a specific set of circumstances, the participants appeared to extract more general lessons from their experiences.

Deborah gave an example of she and the nurse being very concerned about a horrible domestic violence situation and attending a meeting of the Health Advisory Board, a group of older woman in the community, to discuss it. As Deborah described it, "The old ladies were sitting around the table…just chatting." Deborah, being fairly direct, just blurted out the bald facts. She remembered,

> As a body, these six women picked up their chairs and turned to face the nurse and exclude me completely from the discussion. The women didn't speak to me for a few days. I just didn't exist.

To resolve the situation, Deborah went to the most approachable one and apologized. According to Deborah, "The woman didn't want a formal apology. That wasn't what was required….The message was 'Just do better next time'."

Michelle recollected an experience early in her Nunavut sojourn that illustrated how significant learning could come from chance incidents. She described, "Doing a home visit…walking into the house and a child sitting on the floor with a piece of seal on a chunk of cardboard and knife in their hand, and they're cutting with the knife." At the time, she thought, "It's…*so* not my culture, *so* not in the South." She was really confronted with the question: "What is the Child Welfare here? Because that child was *very* well taken care of."

Patricia noticed the need to adapt her ideas in response to the new milieu very soon after her arrival in Iqaluit to take up her job as a social worker:

> When we arrived, it was in July, so it was twenty-some-odd hours of light. I happened to be up with my daughter, who was running a fever….It was about one o'clock in the morning. I saw these little munchkins outside playing in the park. I was horrified!…"Where are their parents?" It totally blew me away.

When she came into work the next day, she remembered going on and on, "It's awful. Four-year-olds hanging around the park and da-da-da-da-da!" People who had been there longer all laughed at her and explained, "That's it in the North. They only have a certain amount of time where it's nice enough to play in the park. You know how hard it is for you to fall asleep. So that's…the parenting styles and what's allowed."

Patricia's insight into the appropriateness of the culturally different behaviour deepened when nine months later, her family moved to a much smaller community. Her family's experience there helped Patricia understand the origin of the looser approach to parenting. In a small community, she explained, "You know everybody….Everything is within a five minute walking distance." She observed:

> I would want to know every minute of every day where my children were, and that wasn't the same for Inuit parents—or even the White parents who had been there for a really significant amount of time. "Well, you'll find them after three or four phone calls. It's not such a big deal."

Rebecca recollected moments of "just having your whole world – broadened!" Her best experience in Nunavut was working with a group of women around a cooking group. Being a big fan of collective kitchens, Rebecca was very excited about this. The first week, a small group of women made "caribou stew, char and a salad". The second week, more women came and they had "caribou stew, char and a salad". The third week, even more women came and the group made "caribou stew, char and a salad".

"We made the same thing every week," Rebecca laughed. When she was reviewing the experience with the group at the end, Rebecca suggested, "Something for the future would be to vary it a bit, rather than having the caribou stew and the char and the salad." But the group leaders told her, "Well. We could have done that." But most of the women coming to the classes only knew how to use a microwave for cooking. By repeating something over and over again, they now knew how to make one dish. If the group had made a different dish every time, the woman told Rebecca, "They wouldn't know and cooking would still be overwhelming. They learned how to make something that has traditional food in it, it's healthy, and they've learned how to make it from scratch." Suddenly, Rebecca saw. "Oh! Oh, yes. Yes, that makes sense!" She recalled, "Moments like that were just so meaningful to me."

Being Aware of Learning

Several of the participants talked at some length about becoming aware of the changes in their perception and thought processes as they occurred during their stay in Nunavut. In their narratives, they showed awareness of changes taking place in their understanding and their feelings. But they also found it difficult to express the details of the changes. Their attempts to describe the learning process and the resultant changes gave the impression that what they were trying to talk about was a subtle and complex phenomenon, at best only partially visible.

Linking Language and Thought

For both Bev and Debbie, learning a new language led to major changes in their understandings of the other culture. In her interview, Bev observed that learning a language that is so different from English had done many things to her. "I'll never know them all." In a follow-up e-mail, she expanded on how learning Inuktitut had affected her thinking:

> When I learned Inuktitut, and, for example, learned the names for different kinds of snow, or the vocabulary around hunting and camping, I had a totally new view of the Land and of the relationship between man and nature, that was only tangible when I was using Inuktitut to describe or to live in the Arctic environment. During the middle years of my stay in Nunavut, I remember the breakthrough that occurred when, as a teacher, I was finally able to conduct all of my parent interviews in Inuktitut. Suddenly my perception, and understanding of my students changed drastically: I had new empathy for their lives, was able to connect with them much more instantly, and was able to use vocabulary and experiential examples that made my teaching so much deeper and so much more effective. When I switched my place of work to the Family Resource Centre, learning the necessary grammar and vocabulary to discuss things at a metacognitive level, such as counselling, traumatic issues in the community, or early childhood intervention again radically changed my perception of life in general. The paradigms of the 'smiling Eskimos' or the 'crisis driven Inuit' that so many other professionals alluded to in our discussions disappeared, and in their place were individuals and a dynamic society that not only embraced me, but of

> which I was a part. This was for me a very formative shift, which I believe I will never abandon, although it is bound to be tempered and enriched by all other life experiences, whether North or South.

Debbie described a similar experience of having "a revolution" in her mind when she learned to speak a little Cree, before she went to Nunavut. She realized, "My thinking and the way I thought had nothing to do with the people I was involved with….They didn't think the same way I did….It didn't come as a gradual awareness….My brain literally changed."

Debbie described this as going from the straight line to the circle. She commented, "We could spend years in a linear framework, but if the person that you're working with thinks in a circle, how are you going to work together?" What she ended up with was a circular-linear kind of framework where each contributed. When she came to Nunavut, Debbie explained, "It didn't take long for me to recognize that many of the people I was working with also thought in this circular way."

When I asked her to give me an example of the difference in the linear and circular way of problem-solving, Debbie found it difficult to articulate. After a lengthy pause for thought, she said, "You're having problems, with your husband, so leave him! That's the obvious solution to people who think in a linear way. The consequences are quite clear. You leave him, then…at least you're not going to have that particular problem." In contrast, she explained, "In a circular way…you come to understand that's only half of the issue, that it's not quite so clear cut. It isn't a matter of just simply…eliminating things; it's a matter of including things." The imposition of the response from mainstream culture is to say, "Get ride of the guy and punish him." But

Debbie found most of the Inuit women who were in that situation had a different view: "Yes, help me but that's not going to do any good if you only help me. You've got to help the other person, too." What Debbie was hearing from her students was that the mainstream culture is assuming that the women are powerless and that the men have all the power. She observed, "But indeed, we had it backwards: The women had all the power, and the men were abusive because they felt so powerless." To Debbie, this is a connection on a much wiser level compared to how we have tackled those issues in southern Canada.

While Debbie showed good metacognitive awareness of the changes in her thought processes, she nevertheless commented when reviewing her own transcript:

> Even after I read the interview, I thought this stuff is really hard to put into words. It's very intangible. It's hard to explain it to other people....I don't think you really do understand how much stuff you absorbed without knowing you've absorbed it.

Although several of the other participants reported making an effort to learn Inuktitut, they did not become fluent. Consequently, their comments add little to Bev's and Debbie's observations on how learning a new language changes perception and cognition. The consensus among the other participants was that not learning the language fluently had limited their ability to understand the Inuit experience.

Understanding Non-verbal Communication

In contrast to Bev's and Debbie's emphasis on learning a spoken language as critical in changing their thinking, Meeka focussed more on describing changes in her awareness and understanding of non-verbal aspects of communication. Early in her sojourn, she described, "Making acquaintances…and asking questions and people just looking blankly at me." And she would ask again…thinking, "Is there the language barrier here?…Can you hear me?" She explained, "I was oblivious to all the facial expressions, so they were definitely responding." When she figured that out, she felt like an "idiot". A few years later, she was in a restaurant in the South with a group of friends, some Inuit, some not. When they were asked, "Are you ready to order now?" they all responded physically, not verbally. Meeka laughed as she remembered the waitress saying, "Can you hear me?" and remarked, "I was so there, lady!"

Meeka appeared to use comparison with other non-Inuit to become aware of the changes in her own perceptions. She felt that she had adopted some traits at a totally different level than a lot of the qablunaaq. Most White people picked up some facial expressions and some terminology, but these White people couldn't see the Inuit things she had picked up, because it wasn't the standard. Meeka's sense that changes had occurred was reinforced when she spent some time with newly arrived researchers from the Science Institute. She commented, "You could see them change and I could see how far I'd come."

Although Meeka was aware that internal changes had happened, she also found it difficult to express. As she mused about being involved with her Inuk boyfriend's family and community activities, "I think that provided something that I'm unaware of."

Changing Feelings

Unlike Bev, Debbie, and Meeka, who emphasized the role of communication when discussing their internal changes, Rebecca spoke more about how her feelings about her experiences changed during her time in Nunavut. "The beginning part was overwhelming. And then it was interesting to see how over time, that becomes normal." As illustration, she remembered hearing about a community feast to be held in the hamlet building and having visions of set tables and a variety of food. But when she went into the community gym, she explained, "It was a seal on a piece of cardboard, and that was the feast." She concluded laughingly, "You get into that within a couple of months, and then it just seems normal. That really did surprise me how quickly everything just kind of became mainstream."

"Saturated" was the word Rebecca used to describe the first six months of her sojourn. "All of your senses are trying to absorb this new environment." She initially thought that living in a small community would be very simple or it would reduce life in a way. Yet she found, "The intricacies…and the complexities…were something you kind of grow into."

Throughout her two years in Nunavut, Rebecca went through periods of feeling very enthusiastic and wanting to learn and through periods when she didn't. Then her enthusiasm would be renewed again. She commented, "I don't think you can maintain that enthusiasm all the time, so it's been an ebb and flow."

Summary: Active and Experiential Learning

The participants' descriptions of how they learned from experience during their Nunavut sojourns strongly convey the impression of active learning. That is, the participants did not learn merely because of passive exposure to the new environment and the new culture. They worked at learning, using a variety of strategies.

The one strategy that all the participants talked about was keeping an open mind, free from assumptions, both on first arriving in Nunavut and during their sojourns. In addition, the participants described how they actively sought contact with Inuit culture outside their professional duties. For many participants, this involved going "on the Land" with Inuit, where many Inuit feel most at home.

The participants talked about using other conscious strategies that supplemented the key elements of openness and extensive cross-cultural contact. They learned from Inuit and non-Inuit mentors. Many participants talked about the reflective practices they used to make sense of their experience during and after their sojourns. A few brought their academic research skills to the task of learning the new culture, reading extensively before beginning their sojourns or conducting research during their time in Nunavut. Their openness, their immersion in the culture, and their conscious focus on trying to understand Inuit appeared to have allowed many participants to gain spontaneous insights from serendipitously occurring incidents.

Finally, some of the participants showed metacognitive awareness of their learning process. They were able to talk about changes to their perceptions, thoughts, and feelings that occurred during their sojourn. They felt these changes occurred in part through learning a new spoken language and from understanding non-verbal communication and also from continued exposure to the new cultural context.

VI. LEARNING ABOUT THE NUNAVUT CONTEXT

The participants' narratives contain considerable material describing what they had learned about the Nunavut milieu. This type of information speaks directly to the context of their work as counsellors and illustrates that they acquired culture-specific knowledge. Although what they learned may not be unique to Nunavut, these counsellors did encounter situations, ideas, and cultural patterns that they had not experienced before going to Nunavut.

A dominant theme in the participants' experience was their involvement with the pain of abuse and trauma in the lives of their Inuit clients and in the communities where they sojourned. Another major theme was the development of the participants' understanding of the process and effects of cultural imposition. As a third major theme, the participants talked about how they were affected by the geographical isolation of the Nunavut communities in terms of personal and professional isolation and physical hardship. A last major theme was the participants' feelings of community with Inuit. The following sections present the contextual knowledge the participants acquired during their sojourns in terms of these major themes.

Lessons in Pain

All of the participants spoke with great feeling about the intensity of abuse and trauma in their Inuit clients' lives. Several participants additionally described varieties of abuse and trauma they had learned about specifically in Nunavut. A number of the participants spoke of how they had been affected personally by the intense exposure to abuse and trauma and what they learned from that experience.

Describing High Incidence of Abuse and Trauma

The sheer level of pain associated with abuse and trauma in Nunavut was apparent from the narratives of all the participants. Debbie shared a general statement on pain in Nunavut that she had heard from an Inuit student:

> I had one student say that it was where it all collected because it was the top of the world. He was firmly convinced…that it wasn't just that pain but from everywhere. It was like a collecting place and it came there because the people who lived there could manage it. I'm thinking that that's not quite true, but…I think that's how much pain is available up there, that people who aren't there for very long and who are in any way sensitive to it, they don't understand why there's so much of it. Now, I have to admit I have never traveled in countries where there's a really high level of conflict and war…so I don't know if you'd have that same sense in those. But I spent time in Belfast during some of the worst terrorism stuff and I never felt the same way as I did in Nunavut. I really am wondering whether it's kind of a unique experience.

Patricia's reflections on her early experiences in Nunavut echo Debbie's observations about the intensity of suffering in Nunavut:

> What I wasn't prepared for was the amount of pain that's in the North, just general pain, just people who have survived. Before…it was basic needs survival, but today they…struggle every day to survive just the pain that humanity can do to them…and everything that a woman the same age as I am can go through in a lifetime and still be able to get up in the morning and function.

Comments from other participants support these observations about the extensiveness of pain in Nunavut. According to Bev, "The Elders feel that at least 85% of all people, including White people living in the community, have been sexually abused." Although Deborah's tone was quite dispassionate when she spoke about the child sexual and spousal abuse she encountered in Nunavut, her depth of feeling emerged when she described the small Nunavut community where she sojourned as "such a depressing and soul-destroying place". Meeka called her job with abused children "hard" and described finding the social problems like "the housing situation or food situation or overcrowding or loss of jobs" to be "overwhelming". Michelle described her work with Inuit clients as involving "certainly lots of depression and lots of grieving, lots of…working through trauma." Rebecca expressed concern about, as an outsider, not really being able to deal with community problems of child sexual abuse and suicide. Soshana described her time in Nunavut as "intense" and "heavy". She remembered, "We'd still get suicides and homicides every week….One of my co-workers got shot….It was really, really rough."

Encountering Nunavut Variations of Abuse and Trauma

In addition to the sheer volume of pain in Nunavut, a number of the participants described encountering abuse and trauma experiences that seemed to be specific to the Nunavut context.

Custom Adoption

According to Bev, *custom adoption* was sometimes associated with child abuse even in traditional life. This term refers to the Inuit tradition of birthparents giving a child to their relatives to raise, a practice which is now formally recognized under the laws of Nunavut. She had heard stories of being adopted from some of the Elders where they referred to "being refused a drink of water or having to sleep with the dogs." In Bev's opinion, Inuit custom adoption practices can still be a problem. "The at-risk kids are the kids being given into custom adoptions where they're an object rather than a child and forgotten when the family gets too big."

Meeka also offered an observation on the trauma of the custom adoption practices when she described young women being asked to give up a child.

> Culturally, they felt that they were required to give their kid to their in-laws, but they didn't want to, so it was…a clash of cultures, because now they were a younger, modern influence. They wanted to move out and take their kids, whereas the grandparents were like, 'You can move out. We're keeping the kid.'

Generational Effects

Like other Aboriginal people in Canada, the Inuit are experiencing generational effects of child sexual abuse. Bev noted, however, that unlike southern Aboriginal people who experienced abuse primarily in residential schools, many Inuit encountered abuse in tuberculosis hospitals. Meeka observed how discouraged the kids she worked with were because their parents were still aching inside from their own abuse. "Here's my mother and my father who's been dealing with sexual abuse since they were six. Now they're 54. They're still suffering. What hope do I have?"

Loss through Departure

Another form of trauma found in Nunavut is the loss experienced when sojourners from southern Canada depart. Fluff described how Inuit people would get to know people coming into their communities from outside. She felt the Inuit knew of the suffering of people who are there without a lot of support, and really reach out to get to know them, to assist them, to be kind, to overlook a lot of weird behaviour. When these people leave, Fluff explained, "There's enormous grief then in the community about the loss of people that one has gotten to know very well and begun to trust." Afterwards, the people left behind often experience self-blame and ask the question, "What did I do wrong?"

Environment

The harsh Arctic environment produces its own forms of trauma, with people routinely being lost to drowning, freezing on the Land when skidoos break down or a blizzard blows up, bear attacks, and hunting accidents. As Fluff observed, "The North —it's dangerous, sometimes quite dangerous….And so if in a community, people are lost on an ice floe…then that's a trauma."

Animals

The suffering of animals in Nunavut was something that deeply affected Rebecca. Although she accepted the value of hunting in the Inuit culture, she continued to be disturbed by a particular episode she called her "worst experience" in Nunavut. Some hunters had found an orphaned polar bear cub and brought it back to the community. The cub was in a cage in the open, screaming and shaking, and kids were poking at it through the cage. "Which was not safe for them, either because it was little but …pretty fierce," Rebecca explained. Rebecca asked the local authorities and received what she thought was the okay to move the cub into the RCMP garage. The bear was given some milk, and Rebecca said, "It was looking a bit more comfortable but still very agitated." The next day, she received a call saying that the proper authorities had not been consulted after all about moving the cub, and it would have to go back outside. It stayed there for about three more days outside before it was killed. "That was one of the hardest, the hardest things…watching it suffer," Rebecca remembered.

Experiencing Cultural Differences in Responses to Abuse and Trauma

The Inuit response to situations of trauma and abuse was sometimes different than what the participants expected based on their experience in southern Canada. As the participants described their own responses to examples of differences in cultural perspectives they had encountered, their continuing perplexity about these situations was evident in the emotional tone of their narratives. Although these situations were difficult, some of them also described how they had learned something of value from the experience.

Sexual Abuse

Danya described a situation when a man had been charged with sexually abusing a child, and an MLA stood up for him on the basis that "He's a good hunter." For Danya, this culturally different perspective was difficult to accept. She wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper saying, "This is crazy. He did what he did. Fine, he's a good hunter. That's doesn't take away from the fact that he should be punished for sexually abusing this eleven-year old." Danya recounted indignantly how the MLA sent a letter back that said something like, "As a psychologist, doesn't she understand that you can't judge people, and you have to forgive?"

Death of Children

Fluff described a client whose daughter died of a chronic illness. The woman told Fluff that she was not so very traumatized by the experience. "It was her first child who had died naturally…Her other three boys had committed suicide." Fluff commented with amazement, "This woman…had lost one of her last remaining children and considered it to be a normal death." In Fluff's own experience, "A 12 year old dying of [illness] would be extremely traumatizing."

Meeka recollected an event when some older children were under a building, sniffing glue or propane, and burned another kid. Meeka talked to an older Inuit woman about what could be done in such difficult situations and was told, "Be quiet. That's none of our business….That family will deal with it on their own." Meeka was shocked and confused by this. She compared it to a similar situation of children killing another child that had occurred in England and was widely reported. She remembered saying, "Why can't we talk about…this local problem, but we can talk about what's happening in England?"

Being Affected by Exposure to Clients' Abuse and Trauma

The experience of being exposed to stories of intense abuse and trauma on a daily basis had a definite impact on some of the participants.

Vicarious Traumatization

Describing her clinical experience, Danya said, "I worked with so many abused people that I got a real crash course in trauma." She remembered, "I felt very vulnerable and started to become almost paranoid." She began to feel that abuse or trauma could happen anywhere, anytime. "The world seemed like such a danger." To function effectively, Danya had to learn how to let go of those feelings. As she explained, "One of the things that enabled me to…experience the horrors…and take it in and be a container, was that when I came home, I had this little kid…who needed me completely, so I had to let go." Learning from a psychologist friend about "vicarious traumatization" and why she was responding to her clients' stories of abuse the way she was "really helped to normalize it a lot."

Fluff also showed evidence of having been deeply affected by the abuse and trauma she encountered in Nunavut. Although she did not discuss her own emotional responses directly during her interview, when reviewing the transcript, Fluff commented on her incoherence and her repeated use of the pronoun "one" rather than "I". She felt these were ways to distance herself from the intensity of her experience. She elaborated, "I think a lot of the incoherence and the rambling is directly related to the difficulty in remembering because of a lot of pain and trauma."

Burn-out

Meeka described how she started "snapping" in response to the trauma she encountered. She was visiting her sister in a southern city, when a street person asked her for five bucks. Meeka snapped, "Look! I give every day! I give my heart, my soul, portions of my pay cheques! I give enough! In a community where I have roots." She remembered thinking "I don't need to buy you a banana. That's what the people on this street are for. I have my flock of four thousand, thank you, and I'm on holiday!"

Gallows Humour

In response to the intensity of their work with traumatized clients, Soshana and her colleagues got into gallows humour. She had a wonderful boss who had a bald head. Every Friday, she explained, "He'd lock the office door…at four and he'd paint a bull's eye on his forehead and we had these little rubber guns. We'd shoot him. It was fun! It was absolutely great!" Soshana also had a group of friends that included a nurse, a social worker and a dental therapist. When they were all in town together, they would have a "ptarmigan party". Soshana said reflectively,

> And those ptarmigan parties are the things I remember the most. It's just playing cards all night, and just laughing, and making fun of the very heavy things we had to do, because otherwise, I don't think I could have gotten through it.

Learning from Encounters with Abuse and Trauma

Although working with abused and traumatized clients was emotionally intense, some of the participants felt they had learned valuable lessons from their Nunavut experience.

How to Grieve

Michelle felt she had learned an important lesson from the many suicides and deaths and tragedies. She said, "I discovered the sounds of grieving by going to these funerals, and these old women keening at the front of the church."

How to Forgive

While in Nunavut, Fluff had worked closely with an Inuit counselor, who talked a lot about forgiveness. Fluff thought, "One could say people living in small communities can't afford to have feuds." But while she was still in Nunavut, Fluff said, "I couldn't really understand it." She explained, "I tried very hard to accept it, but thought that it was okay to be angry with someone who had hurt you." It wasn't until Fluff came back to southern Canada that she read something that totally clarified it for her. "One forgives by giving over responsibility to the person who harmed one, and then none of the responsibility…of feeling that one's done something wrong belongs to you." Fluff said, "Isn't that …amazing? And I think that's probably what she meant: Forgiveness."

How to Overcome

Soshana described learning an important life lesson from working with the abuse and trauma in Inuit communities. Earlier in Soshana's life, *Man's Search for Meaning*, a book by Victor Frankl, had a profound influence on her as she worked with her own abuse issues from her childhood. But she said,

> I wasn't able to live what was in that book…until…I was in the Arctic and saw in this harsh, almost forgotten world how these people still managed to love and laugh and get through the most horrendous abuse and still come out shining.

Lessons in Cultural Intervention

The participants in this research were sojourning in the Arctic not long before and not long after Nunavut came into being as a territory in 1999. The atmosphere was permeated with discussions about Inuit autonomy and post-colonial government. Most of the participants showed awareness of how the Canadian government's interventions in Nunavut had affected Inuit. Two participants explicitly framed their discussions of these cultural interventions in terms of the political constructs of power and oppression. Some participants also discussed how being an outsider had affected their professional roles.

Becoming Aware of Cultural Intervention

The participants' narratives contain indications that through their sojourning experience, they developed an awareness of the history of the Canadian government's cultural intervention in Nunavut and some of its effects.

Effect of Mandatory Education

In her work with the Department of Northern Affairs in Ottawa, Bev explained, "I ended up rubbing shoulders with all of the Inuit…who were developing the concept of

Nunavut." This contact helped her to attribute some of the family and community problems in Nunavut to "the school system…that moved in and insisted that all children be educated in English and insisted that people move from their camps into the communities so kids could go to school."

Effect of Establishing Artificial Communities

To deliver health and education services more efficiently in the Arctic, the Canadian government had created new communities in Nunavut and implemented a municipal government system based on a Southern model, which was very different than the governance found in traditional, nomadic Inuit social groups.

Through the experiences of the Inuit graduates of her social work program, Debbie became aware of the effects of the imposed community government structure in Nunavut. She explained, "In the Inuit communities I never really had the sense that the political will was there in terms of resolving the social problems." When her students graduated, they would have to leave Iqaluit and go as one lone worker into a small community. They would be expected to deal with severe social problems without community or political support for their efforts, something that would never be expected in the South.

Danya described the effect she saw in her clients of the disruption of traditional forms of community.

> You take somebody out of their culture, when…what they believe has given them feelings of confidence and status…and all of a sudden, it's demolished, it's so obvious that things are going to decompensate. You're going to feel crappy, and you feel powerless. And when that happens, crimes of power happen, like abuse,

> and also crimes of denial happen, of substances and whatever, so you don't have to think about how crappy you're feeling. So we put our structure in, and then we say, "Look how you need our help." But we've really caused that problem.

Danya sometimes felt optimistic when she went to workshops intended to return community control to the Inuit. "It was beautiful because you'd see people taking charge of their own community." But then sometimes things would fizzle out; proposed plans wouldn't happen. This would make Danya wonder whether when people have been so beaten down, they could get the energy and knowledge to build back up again.

Recognizing Issues of Power and Oppression

Debbie and Fluff were two participants who talked explicitly about what they had learned about the Canadian government's cultural intervention in terms of power and oppression.

Debbie commented on the "power differential" she observed in people attempting to work in Aboriginal communities. "We tend to look at other cultures…as maybe one down from us….There's just no question about that in Canada when it comes to working with the Aboriginal community." Debbie referred particularly to professionals who go into Aboriginal communities and assume that "clients have no power."

Fluff described it as an overpowering thing to have to learn about the "vast and varied" ways in which people are oppressed. As an example of oppression, Fluff talked about an employee of a government institution sexually abusing hundreds of children and the Inuit having to use the Canadian Justice system to obtain redress. For Fluff, oppression occurred both in that Inuit children were forced into schools where they were sexually abused and in that their parents were forced to use a foreign justice system to remedy the situation. "They learn to use the institutions of that culture to address those inequalities….So in effect then, the larger culture is asked to turn on itself and that's a pretty amazing experience." Fluff noted that the legal system is a very strange system from another culture's perspective. She commented, "Using that kind of system takes incredible energy and incredible strength and courage."

Feeling Caught between Cultures

While in Nunavut, all the participants were employed by institutions of the Canadian government or by government-funded community organizations. This made them *de facto* representatives of the Canadian government, with some responsibility to carry out policies of cultural intervention, policies that were not indigenous to Inuit culture. Some of the participants described their feelings about how being caught between cultures created difficulties for their professional roles.

Finding Common Struggle

Community development work was a major part of Fluff's job as a community mental health specialist. In this role, Fluff described learning how important it is to find common struggles with people, to assist them to create a world that they want to live in. She explained, "In that process, one can't…be an outsider. Cannot say 'your problems', 'your community', 'your youth'….Have to find the common places where it is 'our struggle'." She described it as "A very uncomfortable situation where a program…if it is going to be of any use whatsoever, has to join forces with people against the oppression…which is part of…one's own culture." Recognizing how the intervention of her own culture had affected the Inuit, she felt "called upon…to struggle against the oppressor within" herself.

Joining the Inuit in their struggle affected Fluff profoundly. She observed sadly, "Almost always in developmental work, people who work to end oppression are oppressed, too." Her own institution turned on her work because the Inuit she worked with were beginning to react to oppression and become critical of the government system. The system saw the Inuit as a threat because, Fluff observed, "They ask questions. They object to unfairness or injustices." She explained that one's always going to sooner or later run into a situation where any institution will not pay for people to work to assist people to criticize it. When this point came for Fluff, she felt she could no longer live in Nunavut. She recognized, "I have to go."

Professional Role Discomfort

Both Deborah and Rebecca learned about the difficulties of working in a social worker role, with its responsibility for implementing Canadian government policies and programs foreign to Inuit culture concerning child welfare, social assistance, probation, and parole. Deborah said:

> The social worker is universally reviled in the community. You're the bad person....You talk about wife assault and ship their wives out of town. You take their children away....You say 'no' to people that they can't have welfare.

Rebecca also felt uneasy about having the authority of a social worker over people in a culture where that is not the way things would be done. Rebecca characterized the community reaction: "People are pretty savvy as to 'you have to do your job', and so they are understanding. But every now and again there'd be a blow-up....It pits you against the community." When I asked Rebecca if she could think of an example of this kind of situation, she described trying to investigate a complaint with a mother and child and getting a vehemently angry response of "How dare you? You're White, and you just come here to take away the kids and you just want our money." She found it unsettling to have to do that work in a small community. "You walk into the Northern store later on and you see that person. They're swearing at you."

Lessons in Isolation

The Nunavut communities where the participants sojourned are small and isolated, with no road access. As a consequence of these conditions, some of the participants experienced a sense of personal or professional isolation and/or physical hardship. They described these feelings and the effects, positive and negative, that the isolation experience had on them.

Feeling Personally Isolated

Although Michelle was the only participant who spoke about feeling personally isolated, her voice speaks to the solo sojourner's experience. As Michelle described it, much of what happened for her in Nunavut was really being alone with herself. In remembering her time in Nunavut, Michelle said, "I…can't help but think of the loneliness…that I was faced with….I think being in a different culture, it does make it harder to connect."

Being personally isolated was not an entirely negative experience. Michelle also felt it raised the question, "How am I connecting with people and myself?" She observed, "So it was very good for that, because as much as I was there, thinking 'I'm here to help people and change their lives and make it better', it was really my life that I was looking at and trying to connect with."

Experiencing Professional Isolation

The participants' responses to being professionally isolated showed considerable variation. Some of them found it very difficult, while one described enjoying the autonomy it gave her to make decisions, and another reported mixed feelings.

Feeling Alone and Unsupported

While in Nunavut, Debbie was working out in an old army barracks that served as part of the college campus. "There wasn't a lot of support from the wider college community because we weren't in contact. It…really was minimal; there was a sense that we were really isolated." When reviewing the written transcript of her interview, Debbie further commented:

> I did feel isolated, but at the time that was happening, I didn't feel it as acutely as when I read it.…And then I had a lot of memories around it and how alone I felt… You're really stumbling around, not knowing what is going on.

Meeka also experienced professional isolation, even though she was working in a setting with other professionals. Working with a class of disruptive children, Meeka felt segregated by the community as a whole and by the school system and by the other teachers. Her classroom was a remodeled storage room. She felt her job was viewed quite negatively by other teachers on the staff. "I was a prisoner. We were all stuck in this windowless room, trying to just keep them there because the mandate said kids have to go to school."

Patricia talked about working in isolation in Kimmirut and mentioned how helpful it was when an Inuit social worker moved to town.

Isolation as Opportunity

In contrast to these participants, Deborah saw working alone in an isolated community as an opportunity.

> You have a lot of leeway…and I was really lucky that I had good, supportive supervisors…generally saying, "Do what you think is best."… Now, partly it's circumstance…because they're two thousand miles away….But there is opportunity up there to really put effort into how you manage situations and how you help people solve their problems or how you resolve community problems.

Deborah compared her experience in the small community with how she felt when she eventually was promoted to Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut. Working as a supervisor of other social workers, she found the larger community much more isolating. In the smaller centre, she explained, "It was very clear that you adapted to that culture, or you weren't going to make it."

Mixed Feelings

Rebecca described mixed feelings about her professional isolation. In the one-person office for Social Services, Rebecca was in a very generalist position, responsible for a mixed bag of things: child protection, probation, counseling work with mental health issues, family violence, and community development. With a laugh, she said, "That was pretty tough." She explained,

> My supervisors were in Iqaluit, and a lot of the time when you were trying to ask for guidance on something, it was, 'Well, you're in the community, so it's your call.' So there wasn't a lot of support there, and…I felt mixed about that. I could see some of the point in terms of, you have to be there…in a situation to judge

> what to do. At the same time…there was a lot of relinquishment of responsibility, that nobody wanted to make the call…so you do it.

Sharing Physical Hardship

The majority of the participants made only the briefest mention of the physical hardships of living in Nunavut. This is notable in that, objectively, life in Nunavut is physically difficult compared to life in southern Canada. Outside of the capital, fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products are scarce, especially during the winter months. The small communities lack amenities such as libraries or bookstores, swimming pools, and good restaurants. Consumer goods are limited to those found in the local Co-op or Northern stores.

Bev mentioned that people in the North complain about distances, prices and just plain energy to live in the dark period, saying things like "Poor us, we have to pay high prices. We can't bring anything in. Freight's going up again. Airfares are going up again. I can't go and see my mother even though she's sick because she's so far away."

Debbie's only comment on physical hardship was to mention that she doesn't like the cold, so she didn't go camping. Deborah also only referred to the cold in passing, when she described her family's arrival in Nunavut. "We'd come out of the tropics less than six months earlier….We had never been so cold." She remembered thinking, "It was really scary, but that was really wonderful."

Fluff gave this brief description of physical difficulties:

> I had developed very sore wrists from carting stuff around on the planes when I was working up there, because I was always taking books and things for

> workshops, not to mention endless bags of fruit and vegetables for…people that one knew in communities and carrying them often for miles.

Meeka's only reference to the physical hardships of life in Nunavut was to mention having "1960s weird wood furniture". Michelle also made only a brief mention of physical harshness when describing one of the reasons why she left Nunavut. She said, "And the nights, the winter nights, were kind of getting to me; I needed more sun."

The only reference Rebecca made to the physical conditions was to the physical isolation. She remembered, "Flying in at night…and seeing this nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, and then this tiny little cluster of lights that was the extent of…my existence for a couple of years." She thought, "What have I done?" The community was so tiny, and to someone who had grown up in a big city, the experience at first was really shocking.

Soshana described an episode of real physical hazard by emphasizing how it helped her to resolve her own childhood abuse issues. She was flying in a bush plane in a very bad blizzard. She thought to herself, "Jesus, we could die!" At that moment, she was not scared by the thought of dying but of dying without having really lived and without having resolved her childhood experiences. About six months later, Soshana had to address her own childhood abuse in order to protect others who had been abused by the same offenders as she was. She went and did that – "a very powerful experience."

Lacking Medical Services

Danya and Soshana were two participants who were affected by isolation in Nunavut because they both required specialized health care services. Their narratives illustrate why the Canadian government considers Nunavut a "hardship posting", emphasizing the difficult and potentially hazardous physical conditions that affect sojourners and Inuit alike. Both participants spoke at length about lack of medical services as a major factor in their departures from Nunavut.

While in Nunavut, Danya became pregnant with her second child. She felt not being allowed to have a midwife was really "weird". The government made it very difficult even for Inuit women who wanted to have midwives, forcing them to come to a regional centre to give birth under a doctor's supervision. Danya found it paradoxical that women would lie about their due date so that they could stay in their home communities and have a midwife.

Danya left Nunavut sooner than planned because of another weird situation connected with childbirth. She was prepared to go on maternity leave to have her new baby, with the idea that her family would re-locate to the South when her leave was done. But because the baby needed surgery immediately after birth, Danya and her child had to be "MedEvac'ed" (medically evacuated) to southern Canada and stay there for weeks.

For Soshana, the lack of medical and dental services was an on-going concern. "The only time I really felt scared was when I was sick….It wasn't a great place to be if you were ill," Soshana commented. "It was really hard when you got sick because minor medical and dental problems would become major." People were only MedEvac'ed for treatment in the South if they were seriously ill. As Soshana observed wryly, "There's a lot of stages between being sick and croaking." She remembered a nurse trying to glue her fillings in with LePage's glue and a suture because there were no dentists in the community where she was living. On another occasion, Soshana had a tooth extracted while in a southern gateway city. Immediately after, she went back to the Arctic to help facilitate a big Inuit women's conference. The southern dentist had made a mistake and as Soshana described it, "I ended up with a bone stuck in my cheek. It was excruciating." The nurse wanted to send her south but she wanted to stay at the conference. So instead, "They put seal blubber up between the bone and the cheek." Although she went on to finish that workshop, she referred to medical concerns as a reason for leaving Nunavut.

Lessons in Community

Although the participants were temporary sojourners in Nunavut, many of them talked about the sense of community they found there. They spoke repeatedly about the warmth and friendliness of both the Inuit and other sojourners. A number of the participants talked about feeling at home in Nunavut and what they had learned about acceptance and humour in Inuit communities. A few participants, however, gained other less positive impressions how sojourners were sometimes seen.

Feeling at Home

Danya said about Nunavut, "It feels like it's a second home for me." Personally, Danya enjoyed the community where she lived and the slower pace of life in the North. "Every lunch hour, I'd always go to the baby at the daycare and nurse.…My husband would join me there….As soon as work was over…by five o'clock, we'd all be settled at home."

"I never ever felt like I was just a visitor there," Debbie said about her time in Nunavut. "It was really my home. I felt like I was really part of a community that accepted me." She commented that she is not alone in her feelings about the Arctic. "When I talk to people who've lived in the North, it's almost like you leave a part of yourself behind but a part of it comes with you, in your heart.…It's almost a…haunting thing." She would like at some point to go back and return in some way what she learned there. "It's like a debt that needs to be repaid."

Fluff felt enormous pain and sorrow when she left the North. "I was leaving my home, and I was leaving more than that, because I was leaving the sound of Inuktitut voices and the closeness of people that had become so important to me."

Even though she doesn't know what's going on at all up North anymore, Meeka is still feeling a connectedness. She continues to stay in contact with some friends who live up there. "They always say, 'Okay, but when are you coming home?' even though I've been gone close to seven years." Meeka asked, "Is that my home…?"

Finding Acceptance and Friendliness

Acceptance and friendliness in Inuit communities was featured in many of the participants' narratives. Some of the participants spoke about the acceptance and friendliness they encountered in Nunavut as if they considered it a natural part of the culture rather than something they had worked to gain. Others, however, described feelings of having earned acceptance in Inuit communities.

Acceptance Given

Meeka described learning tolerance and acceptance from the approach to life in the Nunavut community where she lived and worked. She noticed the small-town acceptance and boundaries ebbing and flowing. She gave an example that in a bigger city, if someone embezzled money, the thought would be "Bad judgement call, don't want to associate. Up North, you could go, 'Yes, they embezzled. Dumb! So what are you doing Thursday?'…Dumb move, but you can come over. I'm just going to hide my chequebook."

Michelle commented, “The…friendliness in people…really impacted me a lot and I loved being there in many ways because of that.”

Acceptance Earned

After a few years as a “reviled” social worker, Deborah was very happy when she became the Adult Educator for the local Community College and met with some positive experiences, teaching English to municipal employees and running a carpentry program. She said she knew that people in the community had “forgiven” her for being a social worker when they started referring to her favourite campsite as “Deborah Point”.

According to Patricia, the [name of small community] people were a little shocked when and her husband asked for an extension and stayed almost three years instead of rotating out after one year. People in [name of small community] had told her they're so used to White people coming in, doing what they have to do, and then leaving, but never really getting an appreciation for who they are. When her family was leaving, “They tell you how great you were or…all the things they appreciated.” One of the things that “they were saying…was that they never felt as though we put them down.”

7

Speaking about her work with Inuit communities, Soshana described how she gained acceptance in Inuit communities:

> I had to really earn people's respect there, because they don't care about how many degrees you have. They care about whether you're a good person and can talk with them honestly. And they really care about whether you have a sense of humour.

Enjoying Inuit Humour

Inuit humour featured in a couple of the participants' anecdotes about teasing in Nunavut communities. When Michelle was reviewing her narrative, she e-mailed me this story:

> I was remembering my buddy…first time i [sic] met him was at the Igloolik hotel...he sat with me while i [sic] ate supper late because the plane I was on arrived late...he said to me oh...they're serving raven tonight, do you like it? I had never met this man before and he seemed so serious...surprised and naive I [sic] said, raven...you don't really eat raven do you? "Oh yea" said [name omitted], we eat everything us inuks....You gotta understand that there's not alot [sic] to eat on this land. Generally if it moves, I'll eat it." Trying to be respectful I said, "Oh, well it tastes not bad"....A little later he says....have you seen the arctic frogs? "You're kidding" I said. "Oh no"..."we have fairly large frogs here and they have skin like a seal" ...."really" I said....later that week when I got back to Iqaluit, I spoke to [my supervisor] about eating raven wings and seal skin frogs....well she gently broke the news to me that I was duped. I always had fun with that man....he was a good friend and I'm pretty sure I wasn't duped again.

Soshana described being given several Inuktitut nicknames during her sojourn. Initially, her Inuktitut nickname meant “crazy White chatterbox redhead”. After about six months, Soshana said, “I must have made an impression.” The Inuit changed her nickname to *Ublarratuq Ubliak,* which means “shining star”. An accident at a New Year's dance earned Soshana her third nickname. She was wearing a heavy sequined skirt that suddenly wound up around her ankles. "I was so embarrassed, I ended up hiding behind the coat rack," Soshana reminisced.

> I remember these Elders…peering through the coats saying, "We know you want to have babies but can't you keep your panties on?"…So then my nickname was *Nuloak Nulok*, which means someone who likes to stick her butt out for everyone to see.

Passing Through

Rebecca shared a different perspective on sojourners in Inuit communities. She observed that people in Nunavut communities often comment that Southerners come up for a short time and then leave; other places get the benefit of what has been learned. "The community is letting you sharpen your teeth on them, so to speak." When Rebecca first heard this type of comment, she thought, "I need to distinguish myself. I'm not just another person passing through!" Coming to the end of her term after two years, she felt regret when she realized "Yes. I am just another person passing through." Although she had always had in mind that working in Nunavut would not be a forever thing, she felt she did somewhat steal the experience and then leave.

Summary: Hard Lessons, Rich Rewards

The lessons the participants learned about the Nunavut context were not easy ones. They were confronted with abuse and trauma situations that differed in intensity and kind from anything they had previously encountered. They were brought face-to-face with the realities of the Canadian government's policies of cultural intervention, the effects of cultural intervention on Inuit clients and communities, and their own participation in the cultural intervention. They learned about working with little collegial support in difficult physical conditions.

But although the lessons were hard, many of the participants also learned lessons of great personal value: how to let go, how to laugh, how to grieve, how to forgive. They learned to find community with the oppressed, to find human warmth in the midst of a frozen expanse.

VII. LEARNING TO BE A MULTICULTURAL COUNSELLOR

Learning how to help clients from a different culture, in a different cultural context gave significance and meaning to the participants' Nunavut experience. Their narratives contained extensive descriptions of learning related to multicultural counselling in Nunavut. Material in this chapter illustrates how they adapted their professional practice when applying their understanding of the Nunavut context in work with Inuit clients and a variety of presenting problems. The participants' narratives give us a vivid picture of culturally appropriate counselling in action.

A major theme in the participants' narratives was how they evaluated and adapted the application of their professional ethics to the Nunavut context. A second major theme was the participants' use of active experimentation to adapt their counselling practice in culturally appropriate ways. The participants also discussed two questions of particular interest in the multicultural counselling field: multicultural identity and spirituality.

Lessons in Professional Ethics

Several participants had to consider carefully how to maintain the ethical standards of the counselling profession in Nunavut, working with a culture unfamiliar with those standards. As the clear distinction between professional and personal life became blurred, ethical issues around confidentiality and professional/personal boundaries also became a concern.

Keeping Confidentiality in Nunavut

Most of the participants strove to maintain professional standards around confidentiality. They recognized it was important to their Inuit clients that they could be trusted to keep confidentiality. Nevertheless, they found that maintaining confidentiality posed unfamiliar challenges in the small Nunavut communities.

Trusting Confidentiality

When she arrived in Nunavut, Danya was shocked by how confidentiality was treated by other health professionals. "There was no indication that there were things that were confidential. You'd go into the hospital and you'd hear them talking about some person while you're…waiting and using their names and describing them."

Such laxness around confidentiality affected Danya's own work. When she wanted to start a women's group, she was told, "It will never work. No one's going to come because no one's going to trust the confidentiality." But she did start the group and it did work. "At the beginning it was kind of touch and go." Danya didn't know if anyone was going to show up. But after the first few sessions, she had four or five regular people who felt it was somewhat of a lifeline for them.

Danya gradually realized that she had a role in Nunavut precisely because she was an outsider with the professional ethics of southern Canada. At one point, she had Inuit interns who had gone through the social work diploma program. She had thought, "Oh, great!…People from their own culture." But she discovered, "Very few students wanted to go to them, because…of the confidentiality issue. You couldn't trust it. You knew that they know your cousin or they *are* your cousin." She found this a really weird situation. As she explained,

> I had been feeling like such an *intruder*….But then to see it on the other side, that's what they wanted. And I guess in some ways, we all want that. When you go to a therapist…you want somebody that's kind of objective….I guess they

> didn't feel judged in terms of their values and their culture…and there was the human connection, but I was far enough removed.

Although she did not use the word "confidentiality", Michelle also talked about its importance when she was seeing people individually. For many of her clients, it was their first time to say, "My God, someone raped me when I was five." Like Danya, Michelle felt that having someone from outside of their culture seemed to really make a difference because her clients could feel that what they confided was not going anywhere.

Difficulties in Small Communities

Because of the close personal relationships that exist in small communities, Bev noted, "It is extremely difficult to work in the field for Inuit." Recognizing the importance of confidentiality, the Inuit Family Resource centre that Bev directed adopted the "what you say here shall stay here and not leave here" motto. Bev felt the presence of Southern professionals sojourning in the community and following a code of ethics on confidentiality helped the Inuit counsellors by setting up a standard of comparison, in terms of "a health professional does it this way and doesn't do it that way".

The question of confidentiality came up in Danya's personal life. Danya's husband was doing economic development work, helping people develop small businesses. Danya might be working with the wives, but he wouldn't know that. Sometimes, he'd be talking about somebody and in her head, Danya would be thinking, "Do you know what he's done to his wife? Do you know that he beats his wife?" Danya observed with a laugh:

> I would never say this out loud, obviously, but…I thought, 'You're helping this person? Do you know how horrible he is?' I never let on anything, but sometimes it was really all I could to do keep calm.

Deborah called the concept of confidentiality in the small community where she worked "bizarre." She explained,

> It is normal for everybody to know everything. And yes, bad things are secrets; some people do have bad secrets….But the concept of…having a confidential discussion doesn't make a lot of sense. And to try and conduct child welfare investigations and keep them confidential, nobody in the community is meant to know what's going on, who talks to the social worker--it's like they have to rethink all those things because it just doesn't make sense.

Patricia sojourned in a small community as the wife of an RCMP officer. She was tested about whether she could be trusted not to tell her husband what clients had confided, a situation she had not encountered during previous postings in larger southern centres. She was very frank with people. "If you tell me you've hurt somebody or you're going to hurt yourself, I have to report it. There are certain things that I have to report, not because he's my husband, but because that's what I have to do."

Non-verbal Breaches of Confidentiality

Fluff pointed out that when everyone does know the counsellor and who her clients are, the counsellor has to be mindful about non-verbal breaches of confidentiality, too. She noted, "Where there isn't complete language communication, much more attention is paid to…the expression on one's face or the way one walks or the way one moves." Fluff's comment implies that a counsellor could inadvertently reveal information about clients' problems through her non-verbal behaviour.

On Departure

Danya looked after confidentiality even on leaving Nunavut, bringing with her every client file. She explained, "My professional board says you must keep them for ten years." Her boss instructed her to destroy them because there was no way to keep them confidential after she left. "Someone would get into them," Danya explained. "I had two choices: to destroy them and go against the College of Psychologist's practices…or take them home."

Establishing Professional/Personal Boundaries

Participants described having to make changes to professional/personal boundaries in Nunavut. By southern Canadian standards, counselling professionals are not supposed to have personal relationships with clients, or indeed, to even acknowledge knowing a client outside the counselling situation without the client's permission. Participants discovered that these standards were not appropriate in the new context, although they were not always comfortable with having more permeable professional boundaries.

No Artificial Separation

When thinking circularly, Debbie does not see boundaries quite the same way as Southern professionals. She does not keep big boundaries between herself and her work or artificial separations between herself as a professional and the people she works with. She spoke passionately as she explained:

> It's not an artificial thing. It becomes a personal thing between two people, not between a client and a professional…We're all human beings, and it's not so simple to say, "This is the only way I behave with this person."…I think that's a big struggle for anybody who's working in a cross-cultural environment, because if…you have this idea of we-them, it doesn't suit their worldview. It's we-we.

Get-togethers with Clients

Danya described encountering the issue of social contact with clients early in her sojourn:

> I counselled someone in the day, and I'd be at a get-together with them at night….We were in a small town and people didn't know the protocol of psychologists….Of course, I would say hello, or they'd probably never come back and see me again.

Boundary issues impacted Michelle's personal life as a young adult on her own in Nunavut without friends or family. As an example, she remembered going to the Legion to dance. She found herself dancing with some clients and having a couple of drunken clients hanging on. She felt she couldn't be herself in those situations. This left her feeling generally scared, pretty nervous and uncomfortable.

Giving to Clients

Another issue that Danya identified as obviously different in Nunavut was that a lot of people were hungry or did not have the clothing they needed for their children. "There people would…not have…food; they've wouldn't have…child support. There'd be five kids." She contrasted this with the South. "When you're working with a student, they're usually more unencumbered. You might have one that has a child, but they usually have daycare or a spouse." In response to the Nunavut situation, Danya and her colleague took action. Danya explained:

> We got breadmakers so they could put their ingredients in, and then at the end of the day, they could pick it up. I had one of my husband's friends…get extra caribou meat…and I'd drop it off at the doorsteps of people that I knew were in need….Or somebody's kids didn't have a snowsuit, so I'd just bring them one of my kid's snowsuits.

Danya recognized, "This role is so different…and it was okay….There wasn't any feeling of it being like a charity." It was very appreciated and it seemed natural. "Why wouldn't I give this if I had it?" She commented laughingly that, in the South, "You just wouldn't do it. It would be crossing a boundary. There it was very fluid, and it was very acceptable. It wasn't condescending…from the giver. It just didn't feel that way."

Clients Coming to Counsellors' Homes

Meeka did not frame her concerns about boundaries as an issue of professional ethics. Nevertheless, the fluid boundaries in Nunavut are apparent from her story. In both her counselling-type jobs, Meeka commented, "The lines were blurry." With the youth centre, "They'd call you at home for the keys….Or you'd do something on your day off…And that was fine." In her job at the school, "The students had such a hard time going home at the end of the day that often in the evening, they would come by your house and knock on your window." It was exhausting for Meeka that calling in sick wasn't even an option; the principal sent the kids to her house.

Like Meeka, Patricia had to get used to clients seeking her out at her home. She explained:

> We know in the South that problems don't happen or people don't have crises between…nine to five, but there's always another service there that can pick up; whereas in the North you are the service, especially if you're in a small community. You are it. So I may have had office hours from nine to five or eight-thirty to four-thirty, but…people…would come knock at the door of the house."

Soshana referred to establishing firm personal boundaries when she first arrived in Nunavut. Although the boundaries she established were more permeable than would be acceptable in the South, Inuit complained about them. For example, she described her response to the Inuit tradition of visiting:

> I had Inuit knocking on my house night and day. And I'd tell them, 'Don't come to my door after 9 o'clock at night.' In fact, they weren't allowed to visit me on weeknights. And they'd say, "Why? That's so rude; that's not Inuit." And I'd say, "I'm not Inuit…I need my sleep. You're always complaining that qablunaaqs come up here and leave in six months. That's because you guys wipe them out. I need time to myself. Don't bug me!" So I wouldn't answer my door, and they learned.

Seeking Clients Out

Patricia commented on how she had become used to seeking people out, rather than waiting for them to come to her office. "For them to come to you, it's…not a normal circumstance." In her training at McGill in social work, this would be seen as very intrusive.

Lessons in Adapting Counselling Practice

The participants all offered descriptions that illustrated how creatively they had adapted their professional practice to working with Inuit clients and communities. Their accounts vividly convey a process of being willing to take a risk and adapt in response to the observed results of their innovations. In describing their innovative efforts, the participants also talked about feeling uncertain and vulnerable in making adaptations to usual counselling practice. The participants had to experiment with culturally appropriate use of theory, experiment with culturally appropriate interventions, adjust to community rhythms of time and season, and learn to work collaboratively with communities on mental health issues.

Applying Counselling Theory

Despite the culture differences, several of the participants found they were able to use Southern counselling theory in Nunavut.

Bev talked extensively about how helpful she found mainstream counselling theory in the Nunavut context. Bev learned Maslow's hierarchy of needs for the first time at a teacher's conference. She recalled, "It just put everything in to focus…" She had seen kids coming to school not eating for 3 or 4 days solid, with inadequate clothing. Before she knew Maslow, she would never have identified safety as a problem for the kids. She observed further,

> I also knew that love and belonging were a big issue for the kids, particularly kids who were adopted in the custom adoption situations. But also kids anywhere over the age of 8 or 9 were neglected terribly. And of course, as I started teaching the Grade 10's I saw the love and belonging issue was just where they were…13, 14

> year olds were often beginning a relationship for their life, with their permanent partner, having babies and going through all the sexual traumas that young people have but doing it with a 13 year old mind.

In her job as an addictions counsellor, Bev took a number of counsellor training workshops based on Choice theory, which she found very useful. She explained, "I learned to take Choice theory and work it at…three levels – my own level, in personal counselling and also at an institutional level."

Fluff used Kubler-Ross' theory of grieving in a workshop she gave for teachers following the death of a parent to "help them understand the grief process…for the child". She commented,

> The remarkable thing was that people…felt quite empowered by knowing these stages of grief. It made their own grief so much more understandable to them—the anger or what to expect. Here they had faced these enormous traumas and…by learning something…they were able to bear it more.

Soshana also described how she adapted psychological theories to her work with Inuit communities:

> When you think of learned helplessness theory, with Harlow's monkeys and the dogs in the cages….I talked about…dogs on a dog sled--like Joe has this one dog and no matter what Joe does, the dog won't pull but he gives it to someone else and the other person has a different approach, and the dog is able to get better. So I would take basic psychological concepts where I was trying to explain why people just kept doing destructive things to themselves because they've learned to be helpless.

Using Culturally Sensitive Interventions

Most of the participants offered an example of taking culturally appropriate approaches to their work. Their descriptions cover a wide range of presenting problems and illustrate cultural sensitivity being applied in different clinical contexts. The stories also demonstrate the creative questioning that the participants brought to finding ways to work effectively with a different culture, rather than simply assuming they could use the same techniques as used in the South.

Working with Individual Clients

Danya explained her approach to applying her professional knowledge and skills in Nunavut. "You see what they're wanting, but you take your expertise that you have, and you give it them to use as they want."

Danya remembered how one of her first attempts to adapt her counselling to the Inuit culture changed her perspective on her own role. When working with a client who had a lot of anger, she explained, "I thought of an idea to go out on the Land and to scream." They went out into the tundra and once they were far away from everybody, the client screamed and screamed. As they talked about some of things that bothered her, all of a sudden, all these caribou came. Danya laughed at her memory of her own terror:

> Here the rules were completely reversed. I'm like 'Oh, maybe we should get back in the car!' And she says, 'No, no. It's not mating season. You don't have to worry about it. It's okay.' And they just came really to support her, and…they didn't come too close, really close enough, not touching us. It was a really special experience….Here I was trying to help her, and here she was trying to help me, and that was one of those changing-of-boundary experiences for me.

Accepting Inuit Emotional Expression

Danya was initially struck by an honesty and openness in her clients that was different than what she had known in the South. "It was very different and at first it was somewhat overwhelming in that right away they'd come in and they'd tell you what's been going on." She contrasted that with people in therapy in the South where it takes a while for the real problem to surface. She elaborated:

> At first, it was bit alarming but then it was really refreshing. There just wasn't that whole layer of defensive neurosis that was happening. The cards were on the table right from the start, and there was less intellectualization, rationalization of what they were doing.

Danya remembered how she was disturbed at first by the way people expressed their feelings. "Just the crying. It's more of a wailing. It's very deep." She was concerned about people walking by her office and hearing it. She said, "Initially it was hard. It was really intense. It felt like they were going to fall apart, but it was natural for them, and they were able to let it go." Danya commented wryly, "That took some getting used to."

Recognizing Individual Client Issues vs. Cultural Issues

The question of how to separate cultural from individual issues in counselling emerged for Danya in a woman's group she had initiated. "I had one person in the group who would often challenge me and say, 'Well, this isn't how we do it in our culture'." As Danya commented, "It was hard to separate: What is the cultural issue, and what is the personality issue?" Danya did a number of things in response. If the client's culturally-based suggestion sounded like something reasonable, she would bring it forth to the group. "For example, holding the stone when we talked." With group agreement, she would integrate the suggestions. Other times, the group member would get angry. Danya accepted what she was saying but she would often ask the rest of the group for feedback to help her sort out what was an attack on the therapist and what was legitimate. "It turned out a lot…were not really things that anybody else in the Inuit community was feeling." At one point, that particular person said she wanted to get a traditional healer. Danya was fine with that choice but not long after, the client came back and said it wasn't working for her. "After that, it worked a lot better and there were a lot less challenges."

This interaction led Danya to question herself. At the time, she never thought the conflict came from the client's personality. She thought, "It was all about me, that I was stepping on cultural toes and I was insensitive." Eventually, Danya came to see the situation in perspective but she went through a lot of struggle to understand the client's cultural reality and felt really vulnerable during that period.

Working with Sexual Abuse

Deborah reported how she had creatively worked with a group of older men to get them to be counsellors and mentors to people on probation for child sexual abuse offences. She explained, "Even though I knew that some of the Elders…were also themselves either former or possibly current offenders…I felt reiterating that as a community standard…'sexual abuse of children cannot go on'…created some safeguards just by making it that much more public." She commented, "A lot of creative thinking went into finding ways to work with offending Elders that continued to leave them in a position of respect, but make their behaviour unacceptable."

Assessing Inuit with Psychometric Tests

As a social worker, Deborah observed culturally insensitive use of psychometric tests by other professionals. She described one situation when two of the brightest young girls in the community were sent for assessments:

> They were both diagnosed as borderline intelligent on the basis of a particular psychological test. When I looked up this test…among the questions were, "The run rises in A, B, C, D: north, south, east, west." Well, please! Give a kid who lives in the Arctic a question about where the sun rises when it kind of sits on the horizon and moves around?

Treating Mental Illness

Fluff described how psychiatrists who had been coming to Nunavut for twenty or more years had learned culturally appropriate responses from the Elders:

> For example, for a person whose thoughts are racing and a person who can't sleep and a person who can't eat very much…the treatment would be to give that person medication, powerful medication.…But the psychiatrists often who came had learned, and…the prescription would be maybe that the person needed time on the Land. That was a long tradition…to allow a person to go, usually alone, and with tools and with what they would need to get by alone on the Land, out in that peace and be with nature and resolve that imbalance.…So they learned to say, "That's a good prescription, because that works."

Working with Fetal Alcohol Effects

Meeka offered a description of how she had learned to work with Inuit children with fetal alcohol effects. "One of the things that the literature never talked about…was, you could physically see on each kid when they were going to blow and explode, when stimuli was too much and *that* was a real learning experience." She continued, "One of the things I learned that was quite helpful was I carried a Polaroid camera around at all times." When she saw that a kid was to going to snap, she would say, "Okay, you better take a break! I can tell that you look mad. You're blowing up like a little rooster there. You've got that big puffiness going on." When a kid would just clear any table of anything that was on it, Meeka would hold her camera like a little weapon and start snapping pictures. She said, "When I showed them the pictures after their episode, they'd be like, 'That was me?' They'd sort of blacked out….They didn't remember it but they didn't like the pictures; they didn't like the evidence." It took each kid one or two times until they learned themselves to recognize when they were getting mad.

Working with Spousal Assault

Soshana described how she had developed a culturally appropriate community response to spousal assault. "The men said they needed to be able to express their anger without hurting their wives and the women said they needed to feel safe." The men requested a male counsellor, so Soshana contracted with a male therapist to tour the region with her. She observed, "It's a kinship culture," so she felt a communal approach would be of more benefit than one-on-one therapy. She set up groups for men and groups for women, which evolved into community-based shelters for the women and time-out places for the men. As Soshana explained:

> Originally, when Inuit were brought into communities, in the 1960's, if a woman was beaten, …she was sent to a shelter in Yellowknife and she was told by the shelter workers there to leave her community, to get a job, to get an apartment, to

> take the White man's way of life. And this was completely unrealistic because…her whole family was there, her extended family. She didn't want to leave her community. At the same time, she wanted to be safe and live within the community. So putting shelters within each community was the appropriate thing to do. And the men were supportive of it, because they didn't want their wives sent way out to Yellowknife because their wives were needed. So they were actually more motivated to change then down in cities.

Teaching Inuit Counsellors

In teaching Inuit counselling students, Debbie recalled, "I did not ever assume that…students understood…not because they were not intelligent, but because of the way…I communicated." She used a process of clarification: "Do you understand what I'm saying?" "Yes. Well, no." "Well, let's try it a different way." Debbie felt this process was really successful, for them as well as for her. She said, "I learned probably much more than I handed out." She elaborated, "It's a matter of sorting out what you know and your students' worldview and trying to see what works and what doesn't work."

Organizing Services in Response to Community Rhythms

The Inuit sense of time and season and place is quite different than that of the South, which made a different approach to delivering services necessary. Patricia's description of how she organized her professional work showed great sensitivity to the difference in community rhythms. "I just organized my day so I did all my paperwork in the morning…and then my day really started at eleven o'clock.…If you make an appointment for nine o'clock in the morning, half the time, they…laugh in your face; the other half…never…show." She said, "I had to let go of the 'nine to five', they have an appointment, they should be here." When clients didn't come, at first she thought, "Maybe they're not interested. It means they're trying to avoid me." She had to tell herself, "Don't read into everything." Gradually, she realized, "It means nothing. It means whatever it is for them."

Patricia had to do what she could in the time that they were in her office. "Tomorrow's another day, and…if it's a nice day and the sun's out and it's good for hunting, then you're out hunting." Because of this, she observed, "Prevention was very difficult to do. It's a very crisis-oriented community….I didn't develop the ability to necessarily get them to do some follow-up or some longer term work to resolve some of those issues." She described with a laugh how in her last year, she actually started going out camping on the weekends. "Really, just in conversations…I actually got to catch up with a lot of people."

The fifty-minute counselling session in the office, giving homework and having the clients come back and do some reflective stuff never worked for Patricia. "Conversations…at the Co-op…were probably the most productive, and…getting really involved in the community, because…sitting in your office isn't going to make it happen. They have to get to know you on a personal level before they'll ever trust you."

Collaborating with the Community

Several participants had job roles that involved community development work. They described how they worked collaboratively with communities to develop culturally appropriate services.

From the very beginning of her sojourn, Fluff both recognized the knowledge and skill within the Inuit community and put her own knowledge and skill at their disposal in creating effective mental health programs. Within two months of her arrival, a young person committed suicide in the school. Fluff recognized then, "Because of the willingness of people in the community to become involved…that the communities had the knowledge and the strength to take care of the children and were willing to do that." This made it clear that what she needed to do was to assist people to organize themselves to help each other. "So the learning began right there…the constant learning of how to assist people to assist."

Patricia tried many different strategies in working with the community. She formed partnerships with the nurses and the social worker. Another approach Patricia tried was to arrange with the school principal to hold office hours two afternoons a week and see kids during school time. She had found, "You can set up an appointment, say, 'Come and see me after school', and they're just gone. If it's a nice day, they're out on the sea ice." By pulling kids out of class, she laughed, "They're a captive audience….They're not going to walk away from me."

Soshana described how she worked with community groups to develop effective mental health programs:

> When we approached an issue of concern, whether it was suicide prevention or whatever, I'd give them options. I'd say, "There's five different ways of dealing with this," and I'd list them. "Which one do you like?" And invariably, they chose the group community response. Like, if the kid's suicidal, you tell the family, the kinship family, get the Elders involved.

Assessing Own Effectiveness in Nunavut

Considering the obvious effort the participants put in to adapting their professional practice in culturally appropriate ways, they had surprisingly little to say about how effective they thought they were. Bev described a project involving Inuit counsellors that she had been instrumental in creating as "super effective". Soshana confidently declared, "I did a good job up there."

In contrast, Danya said reflectively,

> I came in thinking maybe I could do a lot. Well, when it came to it, I couldn't do a lot. I could help a few people in small ways that would trickle down, and that's how I felt I could make a contribution. And until I realized that, I was always feeling so wound up; there's so many people that are so in need.

Patricia and Rebecca also commented on the difficulty of making major changes to the social problems in Inuit communities. Patricia felt "very powerless to make changes, because some of them were major social things and you're one person". Rebecca's comments echoed Patricia's opinion: "Social workers in those northern communities who are from the South have done some good work....Have they fixed some of the systemic problems, the broader issues? I don't think they ever can."

Lessons in Cultural/Racial Identity

In describing their personal and professional interactions with Inuit, all participants showed awareness of belonging to a different culture/race indirectly, through using terms such as qablunaaq, Southerner, and White in contrast to Inuit. Michelle was the only participant who spoke spontaneously about "identity" and "White guilt". When I asked the others about their sense of cultural/racial identity, however, all of them had something to say about how their experience in Nunavut had affected them, although their responses were brief. While all recognized their cultural/racial identities as different from the Inuit, a number of them also expressed a sense of shared humanity with members of the other culture.

Becoming Conscious of Cultural/Racial Identity

Some of the participants spoke of becoming conscious of their cultural/racial identity because of their Nunavut sojourns. When asked about her cultural identity, Meeka described noticing that her visual context had been affected by her years in Nunavut. After returning to southern Canada, she remembered going to a meeting and thinking, "Wow! There's a lot of White people here…a lot of pasty White skin and yellow hair and pale eyes."

Through her contact with Inuit, Michelle said, "I…discovered I didn't really know my identity….I identified with…*their* identity crisis. It was mine too, and still is to a certain extent….So, that was a really big part of the discovery, is seeing how vague my identity is."

Patricia spoke about becoming aware of her cultural identity when her family moved from a regional centre to a small community, which was over 90% Inuit. She explained,

> It was really one of the first times that I was ever a minority….It was a little bit of an uncomfortable feeling, getting off that plane and looking down and thinking, 'Oooh, I'm being examined and stared at.' I had never really experienced that before, so that was really strange.

Rebecca felt that her cultural identity came into being in Nunavut. "When you're part of the majority culture…you're just normal….Being in a place where you are a minority forces you to realize, Hey…I have a culture too." It was a different experience for her, being labeled by her cultural identity. "Being told how many times a day that you're qablunaaq". Her Whiteness seemed to be the most significant thing about her and who she was did not really seem to come into it, whereas if she were describing herself, "I'm White" would not be at the top of her list. Rebecca expressed mixed feelings about being White—"feeling very guilty to feeling kind of defensive." She sometimes felt that what had happened to the Inuit was not her fault. "What's happened, happened and I didn't do it."

Seeing Universal Human Connections

Despite recognizing their own "whiteness", several of the participants emphasized human commonalities rather than cultural/racial differences. As Bev observed, "People are people and people and people. They have the same feelings. They have same ideologies. They have the same psychological make-up, basically."

While recognizing that there are many differences, Danya echoed Bev when she said, "In so many things, we're the same. We're all humans." Meeka added support to this view when she said, "There's more similarities than differences in people."

Despite her awareness of feeling different, Patricia reflected, "In our most basic forms, we all have the same needs, and we all have the same wants to a different degree." She continued, "My need for power may be different from yours, and for me power might be knowledge, and for you power might be money, but there's sort of that need to find our place in the world."

When talking about cultural identity, Soshana also expressed the opinion, "I'm a human being. They're human beings."

Changing Cultural Identity

Some of the participants described significant changes to their cultural identity that had occurred during their sojourns. Bev expressed strong appreciation about having two cultures. "It's immensely enriched my life," she said, "to become…bicultural". When she married an Inuk, "I became quasi-Inuk." Bev remembered, "During the first 4 to 5 years, getting to points where I was losing my English….It was really a time of adjustment." Bev recollected, however, that while she was in Nunavut, her bicultural family was never 100% accepted by the Inuit. She was always "2 or 3% the qablunaaq, who's lived here forever." She was also never fully accepted by the Whites. Bev felt, "I was always an enigma to them. They could never figure me out and they never wanted to because I was dangerous."

When I asked Bev about her cultural identity now that she has returned to live in the South, she replied, "The short answer is very definitely I'm more qablunaaq now than I ever have been." She elaborated:

> When I came back here…the kids blame me sometimes, "Mom! You're too qablunaaq! Straighten up and be Inuk!" "Look! You know, I'm White! This is me!"…But at the same time, I love it when we're in Inuk mode and we've got some caribou meat on the floor and we're eating it, letting it drip in blood.

Danya described herself as having the Jewish culture and Canadian culture, which makes her question the way to do things correctly. While living in Nunavut, she did little things there to be Jewish because she wanted her son to have some of the religious culture. She recollected going to a Jewish ceremony. "The French people, Inuit people, English people…they all came together and…mingled so well….So it broadens your identity." Danya was aware she was an outsider, but she did feel an identification with the Inuit culture. She remarked, "A few people there said that Jews and Inuit have a lot in common…just the love of children." From living in Nunavut, Danya also feels that her identity as a Canadian is different. What she had in the South was "Canada" before she lived in Nunavut. "Now the rest of Canada has come to me….Canada is so much broader than it was before."

Fluff commented on how her cultural/racial identity had been affected when she joined the Inuit in their struggle against Canadian government interventions in their culture:

> It's a difficult thing to identify as being of a race and culture that is oppressive to a lot of the world, and to recognize that…one's culture exercises power in negative ways over other people….So that awareness…is identifying something about one's self and one's culture, and it's not an easy thing to recognize that. But I think that experience has taught me to be able to talk about that.

Michelle was very aware of her "White guilt" and felt like she needed to something about it. She explained,

> I needed to somehow make a difference or right a wrong for myself. There's just the privilege of my life, just seeing that privilege, just being aware of the fact that I have a different experience because I'm White….How I see myself is going to make a lot of difference in how I relate to people. And I think learning about the privilege and knowing that reality certainly…made a difference for me.

Reflecting on what she had learned in Nunavut, Michelle observed, "I've gotten a lot of my White guilt out of the way, and in doing so…I'm feeling…more connected to people of different cultures as opposed to…that patronizing…view."

Retaining Cultural/Racial Identity

Not all of the participants described their cultural/racial identities as changing during their sojourns. Deborah saw her own cultural identity as very clear and fixed and not affected by her feeling like a sponge or a leech when learning from cross-cultural work. She explained, "I am undeniably the product of lower middle-class English people. I retain a lot of those values…and I'm very…comfortable in my cultural background." But she said, "You do need to be clear about your own cultural identity in order to benefit from learning…from a new one." As an example, she talked about the opportunity to make camping a lifestyle when she was in Nunavut. She observed, "Some people would say, 'Oh, she's trying to be Inuk.' No…But what is the dividing line between someone who tries to adopt a new cultural identity?" Deborah said, "I don't ever lose my sense of who I am, because I'm very clear about…what my boundaries are and what behaviours are acceptable to me."

Although Soshana felt accepted by the Inuit, it did not mean she became Inuit. She was always aware she was Soshana. She was aware that her economic status had changed; her job as a psychologist meant she was a member of the "upper class" and she wasn't at the bottom end of the scale any more. But culturally, she didn't try to "go native". She felt the Inuit recognized she was different and although she learned from the Inuit, she taught them about her culture, too. She explained,

> I'm cross-cultural anyway. I've got a Jewish heritage. I've got an Anglo-Saxon heritage. I grew up with many different cultural groups.…I think it just made me more adaptable to other cultures.…If I was over in Iran or Iraq, I would have no trouble putting a chador on because I would still come through, no matter how I was dressed.

Being Uncertain about Cultural/Racial Identity

Debbie's response to how her cultural/racial identity had been affected by her sojourn was different from the other participants. "I don't even know if I had one when I went up there," she laughed. "That's always been fuzzy for me.…It certainly solidified my humanness, my perspective. But there's lots of humanness outside of the Native culture. So I do understand your question; I just don't have the answer."

Lessons in Spirituality

Several participants spontaneously introduced the topic of spirituality in their narratives. When I asked the other participants about spirituality, some offered comments, while Meeka and Patricia had little to say on this subject. Some of the participants' comments related to their personal spiritual experiences. In speaking about their personal spirituality, several of the participants made reference to the spirituality of the Land, the physical environment in Nunavut. Participants' narratives also addressed the question of Inuit spirituality and religion in Nunavut and how they these factors affected counselling.

Exploring Personal Spirituality in Nunavut

For some of the participants, spirituality was an important aspect of their sojourn. As described in her self-introduction, Bev went to Nunavut with a mission as a Christian teacher. All she would say about her personal spirituality, however, was "My spirituality gave me…a set of principles to live by so that I didn't become known as a person who was free with my sexual favours."

Danya had a strong personal interest in spirituality, having taken many courses about it during her undergraduate education. About her time in Nunavut, she said, "Truthfully, I didn't have much contact with spirituality." Although she felt there was a spiritual aspect to the experience with the caribou she and her client had shared, she remarked, "Maybe I just wasn't at a point in my development to be…looking."

When Debbie went to Nunavut, she left behind a spiritual community and didn't intend to look for another one. She explained:

> I was already pretty centered…in my beliefs and my values. So all it did was...make me broaden my quest…I just deepened what I had.

"Spirituality was a daily experience in Nunavut," was Fluff's only comment on the question of personal spirituality.

When asked about spirituality, Michelle reflected that being in Nunavut was the beginning of her spiritual discovery or journey. While in Nunavut, she did a lot of reading about spirituality. She explored spiritual practices, and pulled away from Christianity. Michelle commented, "I've always longed to…be more connected to Aboriginal ways, and never was."

When I asked Rebecca how spirituality was involved in her Nunavut sojourn, she immediately replied "For me, it was a very spiritual experience – the whole trip….Wanting to go into that kind of environment …was a look at the meaning of my life in relation to other people's….It was that quest for meaning."

Soshana spoke spontaneously about "the many spiritual experiences" she had in Nunavut. She described how her journey to Nunavut had begun with a weird sense of "déjà vu". From the window of the plane, she had seen an Arctic meadow that looked just like one she used to imagine as a child when she was being abused. After her return, Soshana had an experience that she described as "A culmination of my spiritual journey in the Arctic." From an Inuit medicine woman, Soshana had learned a tradition of taking stones from one place to a place where people have suffered or died because of their culture. Ten years after her sojourn ended, Soshana took stones from Nunavut on a journey to Auschwitz, placing them on the gas chamber memorial. While she was saying the Jewish prayers for the dead:

> I realized that absolutely nothing in my life had been wasted or lost....That the real loss was to be talking with a beloved friend one day and the next day, you're on a truck or a train and you're gassed and you're burned. That was the waste....After my pilgrimage to Auschwitz, I felt this tremendous sense of gratitude for my whole life and a sense of perfect peace.

Connecting Spiritually with the Land

Many of the participants linked spirituality to the physical environment in Nunavut. For example, Debbie remarked that the spiritual deepening she had felt "really had nothing to do with the experience of being with the people. It was more the experience of living in all that vastness."

Although Deborah said she does not think of herself as a spiritually motivated person, she did experience a "sense of just how small you are when you stand at the top of the world and you can see nothing but horizon all around you..." She said, "That had a profound spiritual impact that emphasized to me…our place in the world, and…the importance of treading gently on the earth and dealing gently with people."

Fluff observed, "People have often said these words, 'Inuit are spiritual people,' and that sounds…like a cliché, but when I'm with people who have…a spiritual connection to the Land…it is spiritual.

From her experience in Nunavut, Michelle knew that her spirituality is the Land and being on the Land. For her, she said, "The Land was obviously spiritual…the vacancy of the Land and the winters and just…being on the Land." Knowing that she could camp when it's –50° and still feel warm gave her so much freedom. She knows she can be safe anywhere. She said:

> It's no coincidence that I come home and get a tepee…I feel like I don't have to worry about getting called a 'wannabe'….But there was a time where I don't think I would have allowed myself to buy a tepee and live that way, on the Land. So that's part of my spirituality…connecting with Aboriginal ways.

Relating Inuit Spirituality or Religion to Counselling Practice

Many of the participants talked about what they had learned about Inuit involvement in the organized religions brought by Southern missionaries and/or about traditional Inuit spirituality. Their stories showed considerable variation in terms of what they had learned and how this affected their counselling practice.

Inuit Christianity

For Bev, taking part in the life of the church was a really big platform in being able to connect with people and work with them. From this involvement, she was able to provide considerable detail on religious practices and how these affected counselling. She stressed, "It's really essential to know that…there are just as many varieties of religious preference and style in the North as there are in the South." In Bev's perception, "The most traditional Inuit are also very deeply committed Christians, generally speaking." Bev observed, "We should…not minimize or deny or blame the prayer life of Inuit….Almost every Inuk older than 40 will tell you a time when there was a marvelous answer to prayer." She expressed concern, however, about "addiction to religion" she had seen in people who turned to the church after renouncing drugs or alcohol. Noting that many young Inuit clients would mention that church is their parents' "drug of choice", she observed, "In the newer manifestations of religion, it has become an addiction."

Bev was reluctant to talk about shamanistic activities in the communities but she felt, "I think this is an aspect that cannot be ignored in mental health." She elaborated:

> Many of the people who still believe very strongly in shamanistic stuff are also people who believe in Jesus and will tell you that Jesus has come to take the blackness out of the old style of living, to take the darkness out.

Recognizing that it is very dicey for public servants to talk about demon possession, she said, "There is a fair bit of interest in the communities in Satanic stuff, particularly among kids whose parents are addicted to religion rather than committed Christians." She remarked, "Often the kids…see Satan and talk to Satan." She warned White professionals never to listen lightly to a young person who is saying, "I talked to Satan. He told me to commit suicide."

As a Jew, Danya had more contact with the Christian church in Nunavut than she had in southern Canada. Being one of the few mental health professionals in the community, Danya got calls from anybody that needed to be seen. On one occasion, the minister called her when a visiting missionary had an affair with a fifteen year old girl. Remembering this incident, Danya mused:

> Christianity can be a beautiful thing, but so many clients…were feeling sinful and bad….Here they'd had this horrible father, who was now going to church, but…that had abused them horribly,…and they were…being told that *they* should feel rotten because they weren't forgiving this person."

Danya did acknowledge that for some clients, "There was some help…for them" in Christianity. She recognized "what was not great in some ways can help people in other ways."

Debbie found that one of the main influences in Nunavut was Christianity and that is not a religion or spirituality that she resonates with. When she would try to talk to the Elders about how to do things, they would say, "We'll do it the traditional way." But the traditional way always meant the way it's done in the Bible.

For Patricia, including spirituality was never a part of how she worked as a counsellor. "I just needed to be aware of the strictness of the Anglican Church influence in the community." She observed, "Spiritually, the community was very diverse and sort of split. There's the staunch Anglican…and…a certain amount of the community that wanted to go back more to traditional ways."

Traditional Inuit Spirituality

Most of the participants found that understanding of traditional Inuit spirituality eluded them. While Danya did observe that clients would talk about spirituality a little more than it was talked about in southern Canada, she noted "Shamanism…had been so pushed down that people even still seemed afraid to talk about [it]."

Debbie does not think she gained any real appreciation of Inuit spirituality at all. "That was a very, very elusive thing." She felt that many of the people she worked with may have been in touch with that part of themselves but they weren't keen to articulate it or didn't have the language to articulate it in English. She commented, "I certainly got it heart to heart; that's not the issue…but I tend to be a bit of an intellectual, and so I didn't find the framework."

Michelle remarked that although she was very curious about Inuit spirituality, "Quite frankly, I didn't really discover a…lot of traditional Inuit spiritual practices."

Rebecca had a lot of conversations about Christianity and about spirituality in the community. She felt that spirituality is more frequently a topic of conversation than in the South. Overall, Rebecca found, "Life was very spiritually interpreted." Although she alluded to spirituality affecting the way she worked with clients, she did not feel she understood it well enough to go on record with what she learned.

Some of the participants did describe getting glimpses of Inuit spirituality that were helpful in counselling. Fluff heard Elders talk about the alternate world from the past that co-exists along side of them. Fluff remembered that the Elders had said, "Especially when they were out on the Land, but also sometimes when they were overburdened with worries and fears, the people from the past would come and help them. They could see them." This would happen when they would be tired and maybe out of gas for their skidoos, or perhaps hurt or lost on the ice. "And these folks would come and float them out of that abyss and let them rest."

Illustrating how knowledge of traditional spirituality was important in counselling, Fluff talked about working with a woman that the medical people had diagnosed with a degenerative disease. Fluff was called in to help her accept her illness. Fluff explained that the woman thought her disease had been caused by a shaman in her youth. "She always knew that she would be [ill], and it was a curse for her….Her depression at being [ill] was not just the depression of being [ill]; it was depression of being cursed, and her desire was to find a way to live with the curse." The woman did a lot of research on that and with the help of some Elders came to the conclusion, "She couldn't undo it or change it, but she could live a good life and maybe that would make it ok."

Fluff was very aware of how Inuit beliefs could be interpreted as mental illness by the Southern system. She talked about the Inuit practice when someone is named for a person who had lived previously and is raised as though they were a literal reincarnation of that person. She observed,

> If somebody here [in the South]…were to tell you—as one of my clients did not too long ago—that she was the reincarnation of Cleopatra, probably a psychiatrist would diagnose her as having some delusion. But when you're in among people who are very spiritual…you just really accept the reality of people's experiences.

Michelle also found any information about Inuit spirituality consistently relevant and useful. "Things like a child was born and given the name of someone that had died, and everyone's relationship to the person that died was often very relevant to how that child was raised….And…knowing that is relevant in helping this person."

In contrast to the other participants, Deborah described a direct experience with traditional spirituality. She spontaneously commented that the spiritual side of culture was very interesting to her. "It's always terribly relevant to people's interpretation of their problems or people's interpretation of the world around them." She recounted a story of an encounter with "an alternate version of reality" in Nunavut she had when camping with an Inuit friend.

> At three o'clock in the morning I heard footsteps outside the tent, crunching on the stones of the beach, and they were definitely human footsteps. I tried to wake up my friend and said, 'There's somebody here,' and she didn't wake up.

In the morning, Deborah remembered saying to her friend, "Somebody walked around the tent in the middle of the night." And her friend replied, "No, no. This is a sacred place…for the ancestors, and you're a stranger here, so of course they were coming to check out who was here. It's nothing to worry about." Deborah explained:

> She wasn't a flaky person; that was just fact for her….I don't feel that I have the right to question that interpretation of things. I have to be open to the possibility that a whole lot of people see that as reality. It's not the version of reality *I* was raised with, but it's theirs, and I'm not going to take a position and say what's real and what's not.

Deborah was able to apply her capacity for understanding alternate realities in a practical way in a Nunavut community. In the community there was a terrible housing shortage and nobody would live in one particular house because a man had committed suicide there. She explained, "People had *horrible* ideas about what would happen if they committed suicide." Although the people were fairly strongly Christian, most of them also believed the house was haunted. So Deborah approached the Anglican minister and said, "This is a spiritual issue….There's got to be something that you can do as a religious man to fix that house and make it liveable." She described how he met people on their own ground. "He blessed the house. He didn't conduct a funeral, but he did something to put this spirit to rest, and it worked."

For Soshana, too, her own spiritual experiences gave her a way to connect with Inuit spirituality. When she told an Inuit medicine woman about the meadow she had seen when first flying over Nunavut, she felt really self-conscious. But the medicine woman said, "Oh, we Inuit, we see stuff like that all the time". To her, it was no big deal.

Summary: Distilling and Blending

The participants' narratives about multicultural counselling practice, both in Nunavut and after, illustrate an on-going creative process of distilling what is relevant and useful from their professional training and experience while discarding what is not appropriate. At the same time, they blended into their professional practice new ways of interacting learned from their experience with Inuit culture.

This creative and dynamic dialogue between the two cultures is reflected in the participants' narratives about cultural identity: They expressed both an awareness of being different from the Inuit and an awareness of common humanity.

Concerning spirituality, the picture that emerged from the narratives was one of much variation, both in terms of the participants' personal spiritual experiences in Nunavut and the extent to which they became knowledgeable about Inuit spirituality and how they integrated that knowledge into their counselling. Many of the participants, however, were affected by their encounters with Inuit spirituality in both a personal and professional way.

VIII. BRINGING THE LESSONS HOME

"How do Euro-Canadian counsellors express their cross-cultural experience in working with culturally diverse clients?" is the second major research question of this study. In this chapter, the analysis addresses this question through exploring the participants' experience on returning to southern Canada.

Personal adjustment to the South was a theme for many of the participants. Some of them reported feeling uncomfortable about being back in the South but for a few, being in the South was a relief.

Professionally, what the participants learned about cross-cultural counselling in Nunavut has changed their practice, another major theme concerning their return. They described how they had become more flexible and friendly with clients, more confident, and more appreciative of the importance of community and context. In discussing these changes, they pointed out that their Nunavut experience had changed their practice with clients from their own culture, as well as influencing their work with culturally diverse clients. As a third major theme, the participants offered suggestions on training for multicultural counsellors, based on their own experiences.

Adjusting Personally on Return

The participants left Nunavut primarily for family or personal reasons. Bev left because of difficulties in her marriage. Because of the medical emergency involving the birth of her second child, Danya's family left Nunavut a little earlier and more suddenly than they had planned. Debbie left Nunavut to find better educational opportunities for her daughter. Similarly, Deborah left Nunavut because her son, who had lived most of his life abroad or in Nunavut, wanted to experience his own culture by going to school in southern Canada. Patricia and Rebecca left when the time they had set for their sojourns expired, since neither had planned to stay indefinitely. Meeka and Michelle left for personal reasons, but both had also described feeling burned out professionally. For both Fluff and Soshana conflict with the government system about their community-based approach to developing services was one reason they left, although both also had personal reasons for going. Some of the participants recalled their return as a difficult period, while a few found it enjoyable.

Feeling Uncomfortable in the South

Danya experienced discomfort with the consumerism of southern Canada on her return from Nunavut. She described her feelings as "Why buy something? I've never been much of a shopper, but it was like I didn't want anything….I just wanted everything old. I didn't understand the purpose of shopping."

Meeka moved to a community in the northern part of a province that was about three times the size of the Nunavut community she had lived in. She wondered to herself, "How am I going to know everything about everybody before I even meet them?…It felt like a lack of safety." Meeka found herself gravitating towards more holistic people who don't separate work from life from hobbies from volunteer work. She noticed that valuing learning languages and multicultural friendships is odd in the South. Even though there is a large First Nations population where she lives, she found, "There's not a lot of cultural sharing." When she visited the local reserve, she thought, "This is the community I want to live in." But she was told, "You can't." She commented, "They were surprised I'd even want to." At the university she attends, "There's a First Nations Centre, but when you walk into it, things change."

Debbie left Nunavut with a lot of reluctance. Several years after moving to Ottawa, she observed, "It's still very difficult. I feel like I'm trying to wear a pair of shoes that don't quite fit." As Debbie explained, "Here your work is definitely separate from your home life....I've never worked in an environment...where I actually got in my car and went *home*, away from the people that I was working with....It was an enormous adjustment for me." She found it hard to realize that she doesn't live her life the way most people do. She commented,

> If I hadn't left the Aboriginal community, I never really would have realized that there is a whole different way of being in terms of your work and your personal life, and that realization has come almost as a bolt of lightning to me again.

Fluff described how she left the North with 22 suitcases. She put her anxiety about coming to a new job in the South into these bags. Since she planned to stop in several places on her way, she recounted with a laugh, "I began to worry about these bags, and I counted the number of times I would have to carry all these bags up the steps to the plane...and into the taxi and from the taxi back again, to the airport." On arriving at her sister's southern Canadian home, she left the bags in the hall because she wanted her anxiety to stay with them. But while she was taking a bath, the bags were moved. She remembered,

> I cried so hard! I said, 'Why did you move my bags?'....It was an amazing feeling of anxiety....And here now my bags weren't there to take all that, and I just howled.

Patricia had the hardest time adjusting out of everybody in her family. Part of the adjustment was that their social life was fantastic in the North, among the White population and she also was very good friends with some Inuit people. She felt more isolated in the great big city than she ever had been away up there in Nunavut in a fly-in community. Patricia also described noticing the effect of physical deprivation after her return to the South, commenting, "I still find myself hoarding a little bit....I've...retained that need to have a lot of stuff in the house that I can prepare at a moment's notice."

Rebecca's return to southern Canada was a whirlwind time. After a week in her home city, she went traveling in Eastern Europe for a couple of months, and then moved to a new city to begin a MSW program. Coming back was really quite a shock that left her feeling pretty stressed out. The south seemed impersonal, unfriendly and very odd. Even simple things like ordering a sandwich at a fast food restaurant were difficult. "It was hard even to talk to people...somebody that I didn't know."

Soshana is very aware of how her behaviour had changed when she returned to the South. She described, "We were used to linking arms on our way to work, with the blizzards. When I first came down here in the winter, and I'd be walking with people, I'd be brushing up against them on the sidewalk, and they'd go: Soshana, would you just give me some space."

Feeling Comfortable in the South

Deborah found it was comfortable and relaxing to be back in southern Canada. She explained, "When you're working cross-culturally...you have to be paying attention....It takes quite a while before the right behaviours, the right responses, the appropriate things become natural." She saw her own culture as having a highly privileged life that she enjoys when she has it. She said, "But I am…aware that this kind of privilege is not sustainable."

As Michelle remembered feeling when she came back to southern Canada, she said, "I was pretty relieved and excited to be here and just soaked up the sun and spent lots of time outside and riding my bike." She drew lots of pictures and laid in fields and reconnected with friends. She rented some property near her hometown and stayed out on this land for a couple months. She felt renewed.

Applying the Lessons in Professional Practice in Southern Canada

Being More Flexible and Friendly with Clients

Personal/professional Boundaries

While Danya's private psychology practice now does not involve a lot of cross-cultural counselling, her experiences in Nunavut have influenced her approach to boundary issues with all clients. Danya explained,

> Having that experience…where I could not act like I didn't know somebody because they'd be insulted, and I saw so many people in different contexts, helped me a lot being more comfortable with who I am and not having to keep that professional distance as much.

Before her time in Nunavut, Danya would have been much more anxious about public encounters with clients. She now usually asks the client, "If I see you in public, what do you want? Do you want me to act like I don't know you? Do you want me to say 'hi' first? Do you want me to wait for *your* cue?"

Rebecca's process of establishing a relationship with clients has changed, become more flexible as a result of her Nunavut experience. Instead of coming into the office and saying, "Let's get right to work right now," she takes time to say, "Would you care for some tea?" or "Would you be more comfortable with a home visit?" These are things she probably would not have asked before her experience in Nunavut. Although she still feels that boundaries are important, she has re-visited her understanding. It is now acceptable if clients have questions about her life. "It's okay to give a bit of information back so they feel that reciprocity." She is sensitive to how uncomfortable it must be for a client to come in and spill emotional distress to someone she or he knows nothing about.

Listening

In her work now, Fluff still uses what she learned in Nunavut every day in individual counselling, especially an active way of listening. She explained,

> In the North, there is a very respectful way of listening and speaking, and when a person is speaking, they would not look at you….And when you listen, you say 'Eeeeeee' and you nod, and the…tone of your voice and the way you say that conveys such compassion and understanding and interest.

With a laugh, Fluff wondered what clients in southern Canada thought about that way of listening. "I think they found it…very comforting and very interesting. They knew I was listening. 'Eeeeeee.' Total attention!"

Flexible Session Timing and Environment

From staying in Nunavut communities for three or four days and sometimes seeing a client every day, Fluff learned the value of working fairly intensively with somebody, more than an hour a week. She now does not always schedule a standard interview recognizing, "A person might want to tell a story, and the story might not be able to be told in fifty minutes." Fluff no longer thinks that the best place to see someone is in the office beside the desk but sees the value of doing the work in a variety of settings.

Feeling More Confident

Working with Emotional Intensity

Danya observed that she is more comfortable now when clients show intense emotions. Having seen an onslaught of tears and a guttural cry from Inuit clients, she can tolerate a lot more. "Having seen people can do that and come back…makes me feel more confident that you don't have to rush in." At the same time, Danya feels less over-responsible if something doesn't go right with the person's life or at least has more awareness that she is doing this.

Working with Frightening Situations

Danya expressed a feeling of being more secure and able to handle difficult or scary situations. In Nunavut, she learned to face threatening clients, being able to say, "I can't work with you when you're…trying to frighten me."

Working with Sexual Abuse

Debbie works now with men that have been sexually abused. She credits her experience in Nunavut with giving her a skill base for that work. She remarked, "I learned all of what I know in terms of the issue when I was in Nunavut."

Working at Client's Pace

In southern Canada, Patricia does trauma de-briefing on contract with an EAP company. Her approach to her clients changed as a result of her Nunavut experience. "I let them take the lead a lot more than I ever used to, and I don't beat myself up if they don't come back after two sessions." Whereas she used to think, "I didn't do a good enough job," one of the things she learned in the North is: "They take what they can absorb, and they go off and do what they need to do with it. If you made an effort to connect with them…respectfully…they'll come back…when they're ready for the next piece."

Appreciating Community and Context

Danya reported having a broader perspective on the importance of community. Now, Danya looks more for community resources to provide support for her clients.

Debbie's Nunavut experience inspired her to develop a therapeutic milieu for working with homeless men. The residential situation gives her the opportunity to see everything in action and see how people actually relate to other people and where their pitfalls are and where their high points are. "It makes a world of difference." She contrasted this with more traditional counselling:

> It's just "You and I together, we'll sort all of this out." Without having any real idea of how that person actually interacts in the environment they live in. And I think sometimes you don't even get the real issues going….I won't go back to that way of working any more. It doesn't make sense to me.

Similarly, Patricia asks a whole lot of questions, not just about the issue the clients bring to the table, but about who they are in every day life. For example, she explained, "I can try to speak with them about how they may deal with a certain issue, but if that goes against some of their religious beliefs, then I'm…not being helpful."

Rebecca also now looks at a client's life more holistically. When a client comes into her office, she now asks herself:

> Where is this person coming from? What is their family situation like? What are the things that are going well in their lives? What are the things that aren't going so well?...They may be talking about one piece but how that really spills out and relates to everything else in their life.

She tries to see the different pieces fitting together, the connectedness, instead of focusing on something specific, such as a mental health diagnosis.

Working Cross-Culturally

Working with Traditional Values

From her experience with Inuit women, Deborah gained the confidence to work with people "across the cultural divide…going to international emergencies, either national disasters or conflict zones, and working on gender and human rights issues". She explained that this work is "very much dealing with people about…deeply held, strong traditional values". As she explained:

> Women in [name of small Nunavut community] made it very clear to me that they don't need external spokespeople. Strategies? Yes. You can provide information, but women everywhere in the world advocate for themselves…They know what's wrong with their lives, and they take action on it when they're ready to.

Defining Cross-Cultural Boundaries

While working in Nunavut, Deborah was finally able to define cross-cultural boundaries for herself. She had been looking for universal truths to work with, so she could say, "This behaviour is okay; this behaviour is not okay." For Deborah, the areas of child sexual abuse and spousal assault really clarified her universal truths. This was a struggle at first because as Deborah explained, "There are *loads* of cultures in the world where children are introduced to sex by adults, and it's a normative behaviour." She spent a lot of time asking questions about the rationale for saying, "Your normative behaviour is wrong." Deborah's answer became: "It's an issue of human rights and children's rights." She now feels quite comfortable going into any cultural setting and saying, "Sorry, sex with kids is not okay. Beating your wife is not okay."

Recognizing Capacity for Growth

Fluff is working with Aboriginal people in southern Canada and brought with her from Nunavut an awareness of how capable people are to be healthy and to grow. She commented,

> I think that in many of our schools that teach us counseling and therapy, there's quite an emphasis on what we do to assist other people and how we do that. But perhaps we don't really pay enough attention to acknowledging that it is the person who is healing themselves.

Being with Aboriginal Clients

Michelle described how her Nunavut experience had changed her work with Aboriginal clients in the South:

> What I learned there helps me completely down here. I feel more…friendliness; there's a way to be with Aboriginal people that is different in the therapeutic professions. It feels more like...it's about creating friendships and being part of the community.

Understanding Client's Perspective

With culturally diverse clients, Patricia now recognizes that for some people, it's uncomfortable for them to say, "No, I want to challenge you". She doesn't accept that when they say "yes", they necessarily understand what she means. Patricia realized, "Sometimes I have to ask the same question in three or four different ways, and if I get a consistent answer, then I know that I've got the right information."

From her experience in Nunavut, Rebecca sees that most social work practice is based on a White European understanding and this may not be the best fit for everyone. "People aren't just all going to be the same, and you can't treat everybody the same way....Just testing people out and asking *them* what they are comfortable with...that's just good practice."

Changing Academic Research Methods

Soshana's experiences in the North have influenced the methods she has used for her doctoral research on trauma survivors. In Nunavut, Soshana said, "I saw the importance of non-standardization, the importance of story-telling, the importance of metaphor, the importance of teaching by observing rather than of teaching by telling." When she started her PhD, she found that there was a trend towards qualitative and narrative research that are compatible with Inuit approaches. She is using those methods in her dissertation.

Training for Multicultural Counselling

Their Nunavut experience led many of the participants to question the value of their formal education. Their narratives were threaded with allusions to an on-going dialogue between their professional training as counsellors and its application in Nunavut. Some of them felt their training was relevant, others had mixed feelings about it, and a few thought it was not relevant. Additionally, some of the participants volunteered insights on appropriate training for multicultural counsellors, based on their sojourning experience.

Assessing Relevance of Own Training to Multicultural Counselling

Training Relevant

In retrospect, Danya felt her professional training in psychology was applicable in Nunavut, even though it had not included specific coursework on multicultural counselling. She explained:

> It is *not* true that you just say, "We have to be totally hands off. What do I have to give?" Because I think we have *so* much to give, but we have to do it respectfully....You've been trained and that training is relevant. I think it's relevant worldwide.

Debbie is another participant who found worth in her professional training in counselling psychology, although she also did not take courses specific to multicultural work. Referring to both counselling and teaching counsellors, Debbie remarked:

> You can't...brush away everything of what you know, because what you know is something valuable....And when it comes right down to it, most counseling principles are very much workable in the Inuit culture...if you take that person-centred point of view. I think if you work from there, you're not going to be lost.

Soshana also felt her training in community psychology, with its emphasis on working with other cultures and with disadvantaged groups, had prepared her very well for work in Nunavut.

Bev and Meeka are different from the other participants in that both had training as teachers, moved into counselling roles in Nunavut, and later began formal counselling training. They both also had more intense cultural immersion experiences, through their personal relationships with Inuit men.

Through the counsellor training she had received in Nunavut, Bev had discovered, "Being able to work in the North is really about being steady yourself. By doing your own work and taking care of yourself, you can become strong enough to be a counsellor in this very chaotic world." Bev would love to take a Master's degree in counselling, and then return to Nunavut.

While in Nunavut, Meeka encountered situations where she didn't know what to do. Now, with some of the training she has had, she realized, "You could explore the emotional aspects of the decision-making process or what have you." After her formal counsellor training, she saw how helpful it might have been to know then what she knows now.

Mixed Feelings

Fluff expressed doubts about how well her social work training had prepared her to work in Nunavut. "Not very many people anywhere have to learn how to help people to not commit suicide." Fluff pointed out. "I'm sure that universities who compose curriculum for budding social workers couldn't really even imagine that one might be called upon to work with a community to solve such difficult questions." Commenting on her social work education in the eighties, she said, "*None* of my training would have assisted me in that."

Fluff had been taught about counseling and therapy in a system that assumes these processes occur in a formal way. She observed, "It would be so arrogantly foolish to think that people could have lived for generations in a culture…and *not*…have counselors and therapists and people who could treat people who were ill." Nevertheless, Fluff did not want to put down all her training, saying, "Some of it was useful."

Training not Applicable

Deborah thought it is important to critique traditional models of counselling, which she described as having "built-in cultural and historic alliances". To succeed at cross-cultural work, she said, "You really need to unpack a lot of that stuff and recognize that theories are only theories....Biases cripple our ability to think multiculturally. If you accept this truth, then automatically, you're excluding another cultural perspective."

Michelle was also dubious about her knowledge, feeling that her social work education was not particularly relevant to people's lives in Nunavut.

Improving Multicultural Counsellor Training

From their own experiences in Nunavut, a few of the participants had specific comments about how multicultural counsellors should be trained. They were critical of a purely academic approach to such training. Instead, they stressed the importance of active involvement with another culture.

Shortcomings of Academic Approach

Since returning from Nunavut, Debbie is teaching cross-cultural counselling in a diploma-level social work program at a local community college. Debbie expressed concern about the approach to training counsellors to work cross-culturally that she sees in the contemporary social work texts she uses for teaching:

> There's no way you can learn this in this way....People think...that you can learn this certain set of things about another culture...to assist you not to make mistakes, so that you're not being rude. But it isn't actually anything. It just helps

> you not to offend people….That's often not all that productive because if you're very cautious all the time, you won't learn anything.

Meeka, who has taken classes about multicultural counseling, felt what is taught is outdated. "They hand you a list of ten things, like First Nations people won't make eye contact." Meeka saw that as generalizing too much.

A recent social work graduate with multicultural coursework, Rebecca felt that even so she would have benefited while she was in Nunavut from on-going "cultural training", although she does not like the phrase. "It sounds like you can get it out of a book…and I don't think you necessarily can." She suggested organizing something so that workers who are coming up North from a very different culture would go out on the Land with Inuit or be given a list of people in the community who would be willing to sit down and talk about cultural issues, rather than trying to learn on a case-by-case basis. "That would have been really, really helpful."

Need for Non-professional Immersion

Deborah was eloquent about the need for counsellors to experience a culture outside of their professional role to become effective:

> How can you come to know a people and understand their culture if you can't step out of the role of professional?…I think there's going to be a real struggle in…that you've got professional boundaries…and then you have this whole vision that you're going to come to terms with and understand a whole range of cultures. I don't know how you can do that without developing *some* kind of collegiality with the people that you're working with."

Patricia, who had both multicultural training and experience before going to Nunavut, spoke passionately about the benefits of the sojourning experience. Patricia emphasized the importance of giving herself time. "If I…acted on my first-six-month impulse, I would not have lived there that long…and grown professionally like I never could in any other circumstance." She commented, "They could have piled on reading for me, and intellectually, I would have understood. But unless you're living it every day and you see how it transpires in everyday living, it doesn't mean anything."

If a counsellor expressed interest in being effective cross-culturally, Patricia would be doubtful about that if she knew that person hadn't lived among the people. "Maybe if you've worked with them for five or ten years…But the fastest way is go and split bread and eat caribou and have *muktuq* and go fishing for char." She expressed this feeling strongly:

> I certainly have to see them on a day-to-day basis, morning, afternoon, evening. How they deal with death. How they deal with birth. How they deal with illness. How they deal with joy. How they deal with schooling….Unless you have that entire globality, then how can you really understand where they're coming from? If all you're dealing with is their alcoholism or their parenting, then that's only a piece of who they are.

Summary: Nunavummiut in the South

The participants talked about their personal feelings of comfort and discomfort on returning to the South. The participants described applying what they had learned in Nunavut to their professional practice since their return to southern Canada. They valued what they had learned and used it in counselling both clients from their own culture and clients from other cultures. Their narratives indicate that they had become more skilled and more sensitive counsellors through their Nunavut experience.

Because of their Nunavut experience, the participants had definite ideas about how multicultural counsellors should be trained. In evaluating their own professional training as preparation for their work in Nunavut, they saw varying degrees of relevance. Several participants criticized current academic approaches to training multicultural counsellors. They emphatically supported cultural immersion as necessary in becoming an effective multicultural counsellor, identifying non-professional relationships and personal experiences as particularly important.

IX. DISCUSSION

Learning: The Central Sojourning Experience

Understanding the meaning of the participants' cross-cultural sojourn was one of the major research questions of this study. In their Name Drawings and throughout their narratives, the participants depicted themselves as experiencing significant personal and professional growth during their sojourns. Learning emerged as the major theme the participants used to make meaning of their experiences. Throughout their narratives, they offered accounts of significant learning about the Inuit culture, the Nunavut context, and the skills needed to be an effective multicultural counsellor. They also learned effective strategies for learning about culture.

All this growth and learning, however, took place in a cultural milieu saturated with pain, under conditions of professional isolation, and in a harsh physical environment. In searching for an explanation of this paradox, I was introduced to Jarvis' (1992) *The Paradoxes of Learning*, a seminal work in adult learning theory that provides a theoretical framework for illuminating how the participants had experienced such great growth and learning in such difficult circumstances. According to Jarvis (1992, p. 83), "Disjuncture makes learning possible." Disjuncture represents a lack of harmony between the person's interest and/or knowledge and her/his sociocultural world. The best conditions for learning occur when harmony is disturbed and the resultant disjuncture makes unthinking action impossible.

How the Participants Learned

By moving to Nunavut to live and work, the participants' plunged themselves into disjuncture, thereby catalyzing the deep questioning that leads to learning (Jarvis, 1992).

In describing themselves as "open", the participants showed the willingness to learn that Jarvis identifies as a necessary prerequisite for transformation. Further, they actively sought contact with Inuit culture outside their professional roles. By having social contact with Inuit and participating in the life of the Inuit communities, the participants intensified the level of disjuncture they encountered.

Significantly, the participants' response to disjuncture was learning rather than *nonlearning*. According to Jarvis (1992), nonlearning can occur in several ways. People do not learn when they presume they already know how to respond, usually to everyday experiences. Individuals may simply be too busy to learn or fearful of learning, so they do not give consideration to available learning opportunities. They may reject the possibility of learning because they are already convinced they are right. In a familiar cultural milieu, non-learning is a common event, as individuals often are too busy or too certain of their own correctness to take in new knowledge. In the unfamiliar context of Nunavut, the participants described relatively few instances of nonlearning. Debbie's dislike of cold resulting in nonparticipation in traditional Inuit activities, Rebecca's occasionally waning enthusiasm for learning, and Soshana's refusal to read academic research on Inuit culture are the few nonlearning examples that participants mentioned. It seems likely that nonlearning was much reduced during their sojourns as compared to their lives in a familiar environment.

In their learning, the participants were largely self-directed. That is, they learned independently, without formal instruction (Jarvis, 1992). They showed metacognitive awareness of how to learn culture, articulating several different learning strategies that included cultural immersion, being mentored, reflection, critical incidents, and academic research. These strategies included both *nonreflective* and *reflective* learning.

Nonreflective Learning

According to Jarvis (1992), nonreflective learning is the primary way that people learn their place in society, a task that the participants faced when they moved to the Nunavut cultural context. Nonreflective learning results in reproduction of cultural knowledge, without innovation.

Preconscious learning. Preconscious learning is a form of nonreflective learning that takes place on the periphery of consciousness (Jarvis, 1992). The participants actively sought immersion in Inuit culture outside their professional roles, which provided the opportunity for innumerable moments of preconscious learning. They had social relationships with Inuit, participated in community life, and attended cultural events. Several participants alluded to how their involvement in Inuit culture had changed them in ways they were not fully aware of, suggesting that much preconscious learning had indeed occurred.

Memorization. Memorization is another form of nonreflective learning, in which words of wisdom are learned from authorities (Jarvis, 1992). In Jarvis' theory, this term has a broader meaning than the rote memory work done in school. Instead, it encompasses any learning from authoritative communication. In their descriptions of listening to Inuit stories, or seeking cultural information from Inuit and non-Inuit mentors, these participants were learning from cultural authorities. Learning from Elders about Inuit spiritual beliefs concerning reincarnation or voices from the past is another example of this type of learning. This information is taken into memory without being questioned, although it can later become subject to reflection. For example, Michelle had taken at face value the information that Inuit eat ravens and Arctic frogs. Only when she happened to mention it to her supervisor was this information scrutinized. The participants may, however, have acquired significant learning about Inuit culture through nonreflective means and never had reason to question whether or not it was accurate.

Nonreflective skills learning. Some of the participants may also have experienced Nonreflective skills learning (Jarvis, 1992) when they learned traditional Inuit ways through imitation and role modeling. Examples of this might be when they went camping with Inuit and learned traditional skills for surviving on the Land, learned to sew parkas, or perhaps even when they learned Inuit ways of listening.

Reflective Learning

Reflective learning offers the opportunity for innovations in knowledge to occur (Jarvis, 1992). What the participants were learning non-reflectively about Inuit culture sometimes conflicted with what they had learned from their own culture, the question of professional ethics being a notable example of such a disjuncture. These types of conflicts precipitated much reflective learning on the part of the participants. Reflective learning encompasses *contemplation, reflective skills learning* and *experimental learning*.

Contemplation. Contemplation, a common form of learning, involves thinking about an experience and reaching a conclusion about it (Jarvis, 1992). In Nunavut, the participants had many experiences that prompted them to think and try to form conclusions. The participants' reflective activities such as journaling or discussions with mentors demonstrate a constant questioning of their experiences, a continual effort to reach a conclusion about them.

The participants' narratives suggest that although they tried to have open minds, their encounters with Inuit culture helped them recognize that they did, in fact, have some deeply held assumptions. For example, Deborah struggled with her belief about the inappropriateness of adult-child sexual activity, even though she was aware that such behaviour is normative in many cultures. Resolving this conflict required deep contemplation on Deborah's part before she could establish her own boundary that sex with children is not all right, even if it is traditional within a given culture. Similarly, Danya's assumptions about boundaries required her to question whether it was appropriate to give food and clothing to clients before she concluded that it was. Meeka was quite frank that in many instances, she could not reach a conclusion about what she had experienced or been told about Inuit social norms. In some cases, such as Fluff's struggle to understand her Inuit colleague's use of "forgiveness" or Rebecca's continuing uneasiness about the treatment of the polar bear cub, contemplation was a protracted process, extending far beyond the end of the sojourn.

Reflective skills learning. The participants' narratives contained many descriptions of reflective skills learning (Jarvis, 1992), moments of meaning when specific incidents led to new responses. Learning on the fly was a very important form of learning, as they creatively adapted their professional practice to the novel situations they were encountering. Danya's experiment with taking a client on the Land, Meeka's use of the camera in her classroom of behaviourally disturbed children, and Patricia's adaptation of her office hours are only a few samples of this type of learning.

Experimental learning. Experimental learning (Jarvis, 1992) refers to testing theory through practice. This form of learning is most obvious when the participants talked explicitly about applying counselling theory in the Nunavut context. Bev's discovering the usefulness of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Choice theory, Fluff's use of Kubler-Ross's theory to help with grieving, and Soshana's adaptations of learned helplessness theory to Inuit spousal abuse are the most obvious examples of this kind of learning. But whenever the participants tried to apply their previous counsellor training in a new cultural context, they were also acting like scientists, testing whether their knowledge was applicable and deriving new insights about their theoretical knowledge from the results of their experiments. An example of this is Danya's approach to incorporating Inuit culture into group work.

Nonreflection and Reflection in Learning Culture

The participants were able to articulate approaches to learning culture that they used during their sojourn that encompassed both nonreflective and reflective learning. Through nonreflective learning, they acquired an information base about Inuit culture. Through reflective learning, they questioned their previous knowledge of their own culture, their recently acquired knowledge of Inuit culture, and the application of their professional skills, knowledge and practices in the new context.

Learning in the Sojourning Literature

Other research on sojourners has also described learning as a central feature of the experience. Osland (1995) identified learning to live with paradox as a major stage in the change process of sojourning businessmen, a characterization that is similar to Jarvis's (1992) discussion of the role of disjuncture in learning. Her description of letting go of "unquestioned acceptance of basic assumptions" (p. 141) as a significant feature of the sojourning experience is similar to the emphasis on keeping an open mind found in this research. She also described sojourners "accepting and learning the other culture's social norms and behavior" (Osland, p. 141), a quality amply illustrated by the participants in this study. In a narrative study of female trailing spouses in Japan, Schild-Jones (1995, p. 127) similarly discussed their learning process: "Almost daily the women explored, experienced new things, questioned their assumptions, sought answers and support, and continually arrived at new understandings of their environment and their relationship to it." Like the participants in this study, Schild-Jones' sojourners spoke about their sense of having grown through this learning.

How Sojourners Learn

Both Osland (1995) and Schild-Jones (1999) described sojourners as using learning strategies similar to those used by the participants in this study.

Immersion in Inuit culture. Schild-Jones (1995) discussed how participation in the daily activities of Japanese culture offered many opportunities for the trailing spouses in her study to learn and change but also noted how difficult it was for her participants to gain intimate access to Japanese families or make Japanese friends. Osland (1995), whose participants sojourned in many different cultures, pointed out that the receptivity of the host culture affects the extent to which sojourners have an immersion experience. Because of the intimate nature of counselling work and the receptivity of many Inuit to becoming friends with qablunaaq, the Nunavut sojourners in this study had considerable access to learning from cultural immersion.

Being mentored. The Nunavut sojourners in this research emphasized the importance of being mentored by Inuit and non-Inuit. In a study of sojourning businessmen, Osland (1995) identified "the magical friend" (p. 68) or cultural mentor as helpful in learning about the new culture. Schild-Jones (1999) also identified such mentoring as critical for her participants.

Reflecting. Schild-Jones (1999) described her participants engaging in a recursive process of self-reflection, which is similar to the reflecting strategies used by the participants in this study.

Academic research. The sojourners in Schild-Jones' (1999) research reported more use of this strategy than the participants in this study. According to Schild-Jones, most of the women in her study prepared for their sojourns by studying culture, history, and practices of Japan, while few of the participants in this study reported this kind of preparation.

Moments of meaning. Schild-Jones specifically emphasized the importance of moments "when suddenly an answer comes from nowhere" (p. 144) in the learning process of her participants. Spontaneously arising situations that led to a broadening of cultural understanding were also important for the participants in the current study.

What Sojourners Learn

The participants' learning in this study is similar in some respects to the learning reported in other studies of sojourners. Like the Nunavut sojourners, Osland's (1995) participants described themselves as developing generic abilities such as flexibility and connectedness. They changed their attitudes toward work, developed a broader perspective and a greater appreciation of cultural differences, and gained an increased realization of how fortunate Americans are. Osland also reported that her participants learned about their shared humanity with people from another culture, as did participants' in this study. Schild-Jones' (1999) participants, too, stressed how much they felt they had grown and changed through their sojourning experience, talking about increased flexibility and confidence. They also talked about learning what it feels like to be a minority, another important lesson they shared with the Nunavut sojourners. Participants in both Osland's and Schild-Jones' research described having learned how to learn a new culture, a lesson that the participants in this study also learned.

Unlike the participants in this study, who framed much of their learning in terms specifically related to their professional roles as counsellors, the participants in neither Osland's (1995) research nor Schild-Jones' (1999) study spoke extensively about how the content of their learning applied to their work. Because Osland's participants were businessman engaged in many different types of occupations in several different countries, their specific learning was not explored in any depth. Many of Osland's participants, however, did report that what they had learned abroad was not valued by their work organizations on their return. This contrasts with the experience of the participants' in this study, who found their Nunavut learning helpful in their professional practice on their return to southern Canada. Schild-Jones' participants were trailing spouses, and not employed professionally during their sojourns. For these women, learning to be without a professional role and to be dependent was a difficult lesson.

Learning Multicultural Counselling

How the participants expressed their learning in multicultural counselling is another major research question in this study. The participants often found it difficult to express in words what they learned during their Nunavut sojourn. As Jarvis (1992, p. 155) has noted, "The meaning given to the participative experience need not assume verbal form until it is communicated to others. At this point, people say, for instance, 'It is hard to put into words, but'." The participants' efforts to describe their sojourn to me represent the "process of transforming experience into knowledge" (Jarvis, 1992, p. 156). That is, through describing their experience, the participants came to know what they had learned about multicultural counselling in Nunavut.

The analysis of the participants' narratives lends strong support to the participants' having both Nunavut specific and generic multicultural competence that they were able to apply in Nunavut and after their return to the South. Their knowledge of the Nunavut context, their extensive descriptions of culturally appropriate interventions with a wide variety of clients and situations, and their incorporation of their learning into their professional practice on their return to southern Canada are all evidence of how sojourning affected their multicultural counselling competence. Since this study was not designed to assess the participants' multicultural counselling competence, it is not appropriate to evaluate their level of expertise. Further, the participants had a variety of combinations of multicultural training and experience before they went to Nunavut and many were likely to have already developed some degree of competence prior to their sojourns. Arthur and Januszkowski (1991) linked cross-cultural casework with increased levels of multicultural competence in their survey of Canadian counsellors. Nevertheless, even participants with extensive prior training and experience felt they had learned through their sojourns. Comparing participants' descriptions of their learning to descriptions of multicultural counselling competency in the literature highlights how their skill was affected by their sojourn.

Definition of multicultural counselling competence is a work in progress. Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992) originally described competencies encompassing attitudes, knowledge and skill in three areas: the counsellor's own cultural values and beliefs, the clients' worldview, and culturally appropriate interventions. The work of Arredondo et al. (1996) on operationalizing the competencies and providing explanatory statements remains the most complete description of multicultural counselling competence available. I therefore used that document as the framework for the discussion of whether what the participants learned in Nunavut is relevant to generic multicultural counselling competence. The participants' narratives contain examples of many, but not all, of the operationalized competencies. The absence of supporting examples for any competency does not, however, imply the participants' are lacking in that area; they simply may not have spoken to that topic during the interviews for this study.

In terms of competence specific to Nunavut, the following discussion refers to the work of Wihak and Merali (2003). These authors outlined implications of applying the four principles of Inuit traditional knowledge to counselling practice. In doing so, they identified specific adaptations that counsellors might make in working with Inuit clients and communities. I have also noted when the participants' experience is similar to approaches to working with Aboriginal clients described in the literature.

Own Cultural Values and Biases

Attitudes and Beliefs

The participants' emphasis on keeping open and not making assumptions indicated that they were actively engaged "in an on-going process of challenging their own attitudes and beliefs that do not support respecting and valuing differences" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.57). Comments from some of the participants about changes in cognition and affect that occurred during their sojourn showed they were aware of their "information processing styles" and how those differed both from their own previous information processing styles and those of others (Arredondo et al., 1996, p. 58). Examples of this include Bev and Debbie's comments about the effect of learning another language on their thinking, Meeka's awareness of her increasing sensitivity to non-verbal communication in comparison to more recently arrived sojourners, and Rebecca's awareness of her fluctuating enthusiasm for learning about Inuit culture.

Their systematic efforts to learn more about Inuit culture and how to work more effectively with Inuit clients suggest they were "able to recognize the limits of their multicultural competency and expertise" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.58). In many of the participants' stories, they showed recognition of "sources of discomfort with differences that exist between themselves and clients in terms of…culture" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.58). The participants' openness in learning from the Inuit is similar to the *teachable spirit* that Smith and Morrisette (2001) observed in their study of counsellors working with Aboriginal clients.

Knowledge

The participants demonstrated knowledge of their own cultural histories (cf. Danya as Jewish, Deborah as English lower class, Fluff as the daughter of an American immigrant to Canada) and an awareness of how their values were sometimes in conflict with those of Inuit culture (cf. Patricia and parenting approaches; Rebecca and the polar bear cub).

In their discussions of the effects of Canadian Government intervention on Inuit clients and communities, the participants showed they possessed "knowledge and understanding about how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping affect…their work" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.59). Several participants showed they were "knowledgeable about communication style differences…" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.60). Examples of this include Meeka's and Fluff's discussion of the importance of nonverbal communication and Danya's description of Inuit emotional expressiveness. Both of these issues are also considered important in counselling work with other Aboriginal groups (Herring, 1990).

Skills

In seeking mentoring from Inuit and more experienced sojourners, the participants were engaging in the skill development necessary "to improve their understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally different populations" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.61). In maintaining relationships with Inuit friends and colleagues with whom they could discuss cultural differences, they were "seeking to understand themselves as racial and cultural beings" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.62).

Awareness of Client's Worldview

Attitudes and Beliefs

The participants gave many descriptions of "contrasting their own beliefs and attitudes with those of their culturally different clients in a nonjudgmental fashion" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.62). Examples of these are Danya's work with the challenging client in her women's group, or Debbie's understanding of Inuit women's perspective on spousal assault. Many of the participants' stories showed that they could identify "their common emotional reactions about individuals and groups different from themselves and observe their own reactions in encounters" (p.62) with Inuit clients and cultural practices.

Knowledge

The participants showed they had acquired "specific knowledge and information" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.63) about Inuit culture and the Nunavut environment, including how Inuit culture affected "manifestation of psychological disorders" and "help-seeking behavior" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.63). An example of the former is Fluff's acceptance of her client's belief that depression resulted from being cursed. An example of the latter is Patricia's approach to organizing her work schedule in response to community rhythms and her acceptance of clients' lack of interest in weekly sessions or follow-up homework. In accepting clients' own decisions about participation in counselling, they were demonstrating application of the Inuit traditional value of Inuuqatigiitiarniq (non-interference), in line with suggestions described in Wihak and Merali (2003). In discussing the Canadian government's interventions in Inuit culture, they demonstrated "knowledge about sociopolitical influences that impinge on the life of racial and ethnic minorities" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.65).

Skills

By actively seeking out "experiences that enrich their knowledge" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.66) of Inuit culture outside the professional role, the participants were developing their cross-cultural skills. Their active participation in community life and their willingness to adopt flexible personal/professional boundaries indicated that their perspective on Inuit culture was "more than an academic or helping exercise" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.67). Their community involvement is also in accord with the suggestions that Wihak and Merali (2003) made about incorporating the traditional Inuit principle of Pijitsirniq (need to serve the community) into counselling practice. Smith and Morrisette

(2001) made similar recommendations for counselling effectively in Aboriginal communities.

Culturally Appropriate Intervention Strategies

Attitudes and Beliefs

The participants showed respectful attitudes towards "clients' religious and spiritual beliefs and values" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p. 67). Examples of this include Bev's respecting Inuit youth's reports of their encounters with the Devil, Deborah's response to her friend's explanation of the mysterious footsteps she had heard when camping, and Michelle's appreciation of Inuit beliefs around reincarnation. These examples are also similar to applications of the principle of Pilimmaksarniq (valuing knowledge from experience) discussed in Wihak and Merali (2003). The participants showed respect for clients' spiritual values, an attitude considered important in working with other Aboriginal groups (Borg, Neckoway & Delaney, 2002; Smith and Morrisette, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003).

With their recognition of the importance of community (cf. Fluff's, Patricia's and Soshana's approaches to developing community mental health services), they showed respect for local helping networks. In their attempts to learn Inuktitut, and their description of how not knowing the language affected their practice, they showed that they valued bilingualism. Their collaborative attitude to working with communities reflects the principle of Aaiiqatigiingniq (inclusive decision-making) that is a central tenet of the Inuit value system (Wihak & Merali, 2003). Their work was similar to recommended approaches for development of human services in northern Canadian First Nations communities (Borg et al., 2002) and to the Network Therapy approach, which draws on family and extended support systems, recommended for use in US Aboriginal communities (Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996).

Knowledge

The participants displayed knowledge of how counselling theory can "clash with cultural values" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p. 68). Such a clash was particularly apparent in the participants' concern about the cultural appropriateness of their professional ethics, especially in the area of personal/professional boundaries. The participants in Smith and Morrisette (2001) also described experiencing this ethical clash during their work in Aboriginal communities. Wihak and Merali (2003) discussed the conflict between professional ethics and Inuit cultural values, noting that the APA (2002) Code of Ethics now makes provision for non-exploitative dual relationships when culturally appropriate.

The participants showed knowledge of "potential bias in assessment instruments" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p. 69) when Fluff talked about Inuit belief in reincarnation as non-delusional and Deborah described inappropriate use of an intelligence test.

Living and working in the same small communities as their clients, they were knowledgeable about formal and informal helping resources, or the lack thereof, such as the lack of medical services experienced by Danya and Soshana.

Skills

In describing their constant experimentation to develop effective helping skills, the participants demonstrated they were "not tied down to only one method or approach" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.70). In referring to the Canadian government's interventions in Nunavut, they discussed an example in which bias was "imbedded in an institutional system" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.71) and showed recognition of client problems stemming from this bias. In entering into community collaborations for the development of mental health services, they showed skill in "seeking consultation with traditional healers or…leaders" (Arredondo et al., 1996, p.71), an approach recommended both by Wihak and Merali (2003) for use in Nunavut and Sue and Sue (2003) for use in other Aboriginal communities.

Developing Multicultural Identity

In the literature, multicultural competence is associated with multicultural identity development (Ottavi et al, 1994; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2000). Given that the participants appear to have developed considerable multicultural competence, we might expect to find related shifts in multicultural identity. As this study was retrospective rather than longitudinal, the data cannot speak directly to the question of identity change. Nevertheless, the participants did provide some interesting insights on the question of multicultural identity development.

Relation to Inuit Cultural Identity

The participants' Name Drawings and accompanying narratives showed that they felt their sense of themselves had changed significantly during their sojourn. While trying to understand what I was seeing in the participants' Name Drawings, I serendipitously came across Wenzel's (1991) book on Inuit seal harvesting practices, which provided a helpful analysis of Inuit cultural identity. Wenzel, an anthropologist who has done extensive work with Inuit communities, noted cultural differences between Euro-Canadian and Inuit cultural identity that parallel the increased fluidity and connectedness shown in the Name Drawings and the participants' spiritual affinity to the Land.

According to Wenzel (1991), cultural identity in European derived cultures is usually described as *ego-centric*, focused on the self. Indigenous cultural identity is typically described as *socio-centric* or focused on the community. Further, Inuit culture specifically has been called *eco-centric* because of the strong relationship between the human community and the natural world, with animals and humans forming "a single cognitive community" (Wenzel, p.140), which rests on the same moral values. The participants' After Name Drawings and their narratives reflect a move towards both increasing socio-centrism and eco-centrism, suggesting that their sense of self was significantly influenced by extended contact with Inuit culture. These elements of connectedness to community and the Land were also prevalent in their extended narratives, notably in their linking spirituality to the Land. By adopting aspects of Inuit culture while maintaining their own, the participants' showed evidence of *integration* (Berry, 2001), a strategy for dealing with cross-cultural contact often seen among immigrants.

Paradoxically, the sense of change and the nature of the changes described in the Name Drawings and throughout the narratives contrast with the participants' material specifically on the question of cultural identity. Throughout their narratives, participants showed their awareness of belonging to a different culture indirectly, through using terms such as qablunaaq, Southerner, and White in contrast to Inuit. Their spontaneous narratives were threaded with allusions to their awareness of cultural differences and how this affected their work with Inuit clients. But most of them did not speak specifically about their own sense of cultural or racial identity until I asked them directly about it and even then, their responses were brief. Although their sense of self appears to have been changed by their extended sojourns with Inuit culture, the participants themselves did not articulate experiencing a change in cultural/racial identity until I prompted them. That is, for these participants, cultural/racial identity was not a spontaneously meaningful frame to make sense of their experiences in Nunavut. In this, they resembled the participants in Smith and Morrisette's (2001) study who also did not emphasize the concept of cultural identity in describing their experiences. Wihak (2004) described a similar process of becoming aware of Whiteness without thinking of it as an identity issue.

Identity or Generativity?

In Erikson's seminal theory of lifespan development (1959, 1982), he described identity formation as a task primarily of adolescence. The participants in this study were adult women and their narratives showed little concern with the fundamental question of identity: "Who am I?" Rather, they were concerned with the question of "How can I help?" This question is the focus of the stage Erikson called *generativity*, which he saw as encompassing much of adult life. That is, the sojourning counsellors were involved with question of the effective caring (McAdams, et al., 1997), rather than identity. Through their commitment to being effective helpers, their identities also expanded (McAdams, Hart & Maruna, 1998) to incorporate caring for people from a different culture. This finding sheds light on Holcomb-McCoy's (2000) findings from a factor analysis of a multicultural counselling competence questionnaire, in which Racial Identity emerged as a factor distinct from Knowledge, Awareness, and Skills. Through increasing generativity, counsellors may be able to develop significant multicultural competence without necessarily experiencing related shifts in identity as personally meaningful or significant.

Relation to Theoretical Models of Cultural/Racial Identity Development

Although identity was not a central question for the participants, we can nevertheless see in their narratives some resemblance to major theoretical models of cultural/racial identity development used in the multicultural counseling (Helms, 1990,1995) and sojourning (Bennett, 1986, 2001) literature.

Helms' White Racial Identity Development Model

In the Nunavut context, these participants were members of a cultural/racial minority. Some of the participants described themselves as first becoming of aware of being White when they moved to Nunavut. Their responses are similar to the Disintegration status of Helms' (1990, 1995) model, in which an individual experiences confusion on becoming aware of race. Other participants spoke about already being aware of their cultural/racial identity when they moved to Nunavut, either through being themselves a member of an invisible minority or through previous cross-cultural contact.

None of the participants made remarks resembling Helms' (1990, 1995) descriptions of Reintegration or Pseudoindependence statuses, in which an individual first accepts and then begins to question White superiority. This absence may reflect the personal history of the participants regarding racism and/or differences between the Canadian and American contexts concerning race relations. Since the participants did, however, display behaviour and ideas typical of the later status of Immersion/Emmersion, it also suggests that Helms' model, based on the US experience soon after the American civil rights movement of the 1960s, may not reflect a universal and unvarying developmental sequence. In moving to Nunavut and staying for an extended period, the participants can be seen as having adopted the Immersion/Emersion status. In their work with their Inuit clients and communities, they showed a commitment to activism that Helms (1990, 1995) considered characteristic of this status. Their frequent comments concerning differences between Inuit culture and their own suggested that they experienced *hypervigilance* regarding matters of race, a characteristic which Helms associated with this status.

Some of the participants' comments further suggest that their dominant White identity status is Autonomy. In making reference to concepts such as power, oppression and White privilege, participants were showing evidence of a mature White identity, as Helms (1990, 1995) described it. Most of the participants have continued to work across cultures/races since their return to southern Canada, which is another characteristic of Autonomy.

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Bennett (1986, 2001) proposed that encounters with difference in cross-cultural work precipitate the development of a cognitive-affective shift from being ethnocentric to ethnorelative. The participants in this study did not offer any comments characteristic of Bennett's early stages of ethnocentrism (Denial, Defense), in which an individual either ignores cultural differences or maintains a stance of cultural superiority. Many of the participants, however, referred to universal human characteristics when discussing the similarities between themselves and Inuit. In Bennett's model, such remarks are considered typical of Minimization, the last ethnocentric stage. People in this stage assume that characteristics valued in their own culture are universally valued, thus minimizing important cultural differences. They are not able to recognize differences in worldview, for example, that value collaboration more highly than competition or interdependence more highly than independence. The participants in this study, however, seem to be referring to a deeper level of shared humanity.

Interestingly, Bennett (1986, 2001) gave the name Empathy to the first phase of Adaptation, the second ethnorelative stage. Since that quality is also a characteristic of good counsellors (Chung & Bemak, 2002), the participants' recognition of universal human characteristics may be statements of deep empathy, since shared humanness is what makes empathy possible. Such deep empathy is reflected in Kim's (2001) description of *universalism* as one characteristic of a developed intercultural identity. Certainly, in their extensive descriptions of how they sensitively adapted their professional practice to the Nunavut context and Inuit culture, the participants did seem to be functioning in the second ethnorelative stage of Adaptation rather than in Minimization.

The participants showed evidence of what Bennett (1986, 2001) calls Pluralism, the second phase of the Adaptation stage. Pluralism, which involves internalization of another culture's frame of reference, develops through the type of extensive cross-cultural contact that these participants experienced. The indications of socio-centric and eco-centric features in their Name Drawings and their references to feeling at home in Nunavut suggest that a significant degree of internalization of Inuit culture had occurred. While only one participant (Bev) claimed to have developed a fully bicultural identity, the other participants did offer descriptions of how they had continued to value and apply their learning from involvement in Inuit culture once they returned to their original cultural context; this also suggests that internalization had occurred.

Bennett's (1986, 2001) last stage is termed Integration. In the first phase of this stage, Contextual Evaluation, a person is able to choose consciously which cultural frame to apply. Bennett described such people as "committed to using good judgment in choosing the best treatment of a particular situation" (p. 60). Evidence of Contextual Evaluation is apparent in the participants' descriptions of how they made conscious decisions about applying conventional counselling theory and practice in Nunavut and about applying their Nunavut learning to their post-sojourn professional practice.

The participants' narratives contain scant indication concerning whether any of them reached Constructive Marginality, the second phase of the Integration stage. (Bennett 1986, 2001) Bennett described people in the Constructive Marginality phase as having "no 'natural' cultural identity" (1986, p.62) but instead being outside of any specific culture. Most of the participants in this study talked about having a clear affinity with their own cultural origins. Only Debbie, with her refusal to give a definitive answer to my question about cultural identity, was possibly describing the state of having transcended identification with a particular culture.

Multicultural Counselling and Spiritual Development

Authorities in multicultural counselling such as Sue and Sue (2003) have proposed that multicultural counsellors need to respect their clients' spirituality. Beyond that, Fukuyama and Sevig (1997, 1999) have proposed that the counsellors' own spiritual development would enhance their multicultural counselling competence and contribute to the development of a multicultural identity.

Many of the participants in this study did indeed make meaning of their sojourn in terms of personal spirituality. Paradoxically, the participant's own sense of spirituality was not necessarily paralleled by their sense of understanding Inuit spirituality and involvement in conventional religion.

Bev was the participant whose reason for moving to Nunavut most closely resembled the Christian missionary motif Harper (2002) described in her study of teachers in the Arctic. She was able to offer much information on both traditional and modern manifestations of Inuit spirituality and religion that would be useful to other counsellors. Soshana, too, expressed a deep personal spirituality that she felt helped her connect with Inuit but had little to say about incorporating Inuit spirituality into her professional practice. Several other participants also felt personal spirituality was important during their sojourns. While they also reported finding out little about Inuit spirituality, what they did find out was relevant and useful in their counselling practice.

Deborah, who claimed to have no spiritual inclinations, provided a detailed story about her own encounter with the Inuit ancestors and described using her understanding of Inuit spiritual beliefs constructively in her work with the community. Meeka and Patricia, who did not see spirituality as important in their sojourns, also did not emphasize spiritual concerns in their description of their professional practice.

Although many of the participants' narratives share Fukuyama and Sevig's (1997, 1999) concerns about the importance of personal spirituality, some participants' narratives do not. What was common to all the participants, however, was their generousity and compassion, qualities that are valued in all spiritual traditions (Hanna, et al., 1999). Cultivation of these qualities may be what is necessary in multicultural counselling work, regardless of whether the individual relates that explicitly to personal spirituality.

The experiences of most of these participants provide support for the notion that being aware of clients' spirituality is important to counselling practice as suggested in the multicultural counselling literature (Sue & Sue; 2003; Wihak & Merali, 2003). Their experiences, however, also indicate that finding out about indigenous spiritual beliefs and traditions is not always easy to do. Clients may be reluctant to talk about spirituality to an outsider or the traditions themselves may be too complex and subtle to convey through words.

Implications for Multicultural Counsellor Education and Professional Development

Multicultural Counselling Competence

Participants' development of multicultural counselling competence was catalyzed by the intense disjuncture of moving to Nunavut, with its very different cultural context, and being immersed in Inuit culture for periods ranging from 2 to 19 years. This has implications for the development of multicultural counselling competence, suggesting that extensive cross-cultural contact should be included in professional education and development efforts. Such a lengthy sojourn clearly is not feasible for everyone. Nevertheless, the participants were emphatic that extensive non-professional contact with the clients' culture is essential to become competent as a counsellor in that culture. The extended interaction of a sojourn provides opportunity for the peripheral learning needed to acquire a basic understanding of a culture, for the unexpected revelations of one's own deep assumptions and subsequent resolution through extended contemplation, for the moments of meaning when spontaneous cross-cultural insights arise, and for active experimentation with applying existing counselling theory and approaches in a new context. Sojourning thus obviously provided opportunities for learning that would be hard to duplicate through less intensive cross-cultural contact or classroom learning.

The development of multicultural competence could, however, be initiated by shorter, guided sojourns. Boyle et al. (1999) described how sojourning for two weeks in Mexico accelerated development of multicultural counselling competence in social work students. The participants in the present study, too, described becoming aware of cultural differences very early in their sojourn, suggesting that benefit can be gained from cross-cultural immersion of shorter duration. In the Canadian context, this type of sojourn could take place through home stays on Aboriginal reserves and/or in the homes of unilingual immigrant families in predominantly immigrant neighbourhoods. For students admitted to counsellor education programs without previous cross-cultural sojourning experience (e.g. with CUSO or Canada World Youth), this type of cross-cultural exposure should be structured as an experiential learning course, included as part of the counsellor education curriculum.

The key to success of such an educational strategy would be to have counselling students approach their cross-cultural contact as learners, not professionals. In addition to non-professional immersion, guided sojourns would need to include other strategies the participants identified in their learning: cultural mentors and systematic self-reflection through techniques such as journaling or discussion groups.

A second important finding of this research is that becoming multiculturally competent is an on-going process. Even the participants with multicultural training and/or cross-cultural experience before moving North continued to learn and develop professionally during their sojourns in Nunavut. To all the participants, being multiculturally competent involved a continuing effort to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their clients' experiences and worldview. The implication of this for professional education and development is that initial education in multicultural counselling can never be sufficient for competent practice. Multicultural counsellors must engage in continuing professional education and non-professional contact with culturally diverse individuals and communities to maintain and deepen their competence. As Arthur (2004) has suggested, on-going cultural and professional mentoring, such as these participants sought, is a necessary component of continuing professional education for multicultural competence.

Multicultural Identity

The development of White Racial Identity is considered important for multicultural counsellors in the United States (Arredondo et al., 1996). In this Canadian study, however, the participants appear to have become aware of their own Whiteness and its meaning in relation to minority cultures in Canada without explicitly framing their understanding as a change in their cultural/racial identity. Smith and Morrisette (2001) reported similar findings in their study of counsellors working in Canadian Aboriginal communities. These reports from experienced Canadian multicultural counsellors suggest that acquisition of the attitudes and behaviours associated with mature White Racial Identity can occur without the formal training in cultural/racial identity development models recommended by Arredondo et al. (1996). This raises the question of the extent to which direct focus on racial identity is necessary or beneficial in the multicultural counselling curriculum in the Canadian context.

Bennett (1986, 2001) has pointed out that training to increase ethnorelativism must be carefully tailored to the student's current level of development. Premature introduction to overly challenging material can produce retreat to ethnocentric attitudes rather than the desired advance to ethnorelativism. Carson and Johnston (2000), for example, described encountering resistance from some student teachers in a course designed to prepare them for culturally diverse classrooms in Canada. Canadian counsellors, living in the context of Canadian race relations, may therefore find an emphasis on White Identity models generated in the U.S. to be at best irrelevant and at worst threatening to liberal attitudes towards racism and prejudice.

A more fruitful approach, then, may be to allow students to experience directly what it feels like to be a minority and to learn about the minority experience from their contacts with minority individuals. This could be accomplished through the type of short-term sojourning experiences described above. With this direct exposure, the students' own empathy and generativity, supported by appropriate mentoring, will then lead them to a deeper understanding of what it means to be White in Canada.

Implications for Future Research

An obvious extension to this research would involve a longitudinal study of Euro-Canadian counsellors during a sojourning experience. The current study was retrospective and the participants did not describe their sojourning experiences or their internal cognitive-affective changes in terms of a chronological progression or distinctive stages. Longitudinal research could be conducted with counselling students during short-term sojourns and counselling practicums with culturally diverse clients to observe the processes involved in development of multicultural counselling competence and multicultural identity. Program evaluations that included pre- and post-sojourn assessments of their competence and identity could also be carried out to clarify how they are affected by the sojourning experience.

Another interesting research direction would be to conduct a smaller number of more intensive case studies, with in-depth interviews and the detailed follow-up throughout the interpretation process. While interpreting the participants' narratives, I often came upon comments that I wished I had probed more deeply. I felt the participants could have told me much more, given more time. More focus on two particular areas would be informative: participants' metacognition of changes in cognition and affect and more detailed examples of interventions with specific clients. A deeper understanding of the lived experience of becoming increasingly multiculturally competent would assist in the development of more skillful counsellor education programs, as would experience-based examples of effective intervention strategies for use with culturally diverse clients.

Spirituality and the return from a sojourn were two questions of interest to this study. Although the participants' narratives did provide some insights on these topics, both subjects could benefit from research specifically focused on them. The information given to participants in this study prior to the research interview did not direct their attention to these questions, and hence participants may not have been prepared to focus on relevant experiences and insights. If the research question or questions were framed explicitly in terms of spirituality and/or the return phrase and the participants' were prepared to discuss their sojourning experiences in those terms, their answers might be more elaborated, and more extensive information would likely be gained.

Another research possibility came from my own deep immersion in the participants' narratives. At one point, the participants began to have imaginary conversations in my mind. (According to my brother and my brother-in-law, both experienced dramatists, this phenomenon happens to other writers, so I was not too worried about it. It did help me in composing the research text.) It occurred to me that an interesting follow-up to this study would be to hold a group session with the participants and explore their reactions to the themes I identified in their narratives. Such a discussion would undoubtedly reveal deeper dimensions of the sojourning experience and the counsellors' own development during their sojourn.

A useful extension of this research would be to look at the experience of counsellors who have sojourned in non-Inuit cultures, such as Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. While participants such as these may be difficult to locate, the recent inclusion of psychologists in the efforts of the aid-sending organization Doctors without Borders may make such a sample feasible.

A final interesting research possibility would be to have Canadian multicultural counsellors, such as the participants in this study, critique racial identity development models and be involved in validation of associated assessment instruments. This research raised questions about the appropriateness of applying Helms' (1990, 1995) White Racial Identity Development model specifically as well as other American-based models in the Canadian context. Because the participants' did not focus on the changes they were experiencing as changes racial identity, it drew attention to the fact that those models and associated assessment instruments have not yet been validated outside the American culture in which they were developed.

Summary

This study was intended to explore how sojourning counsellors made meaning of their experiences and how they expressed their cross-cultural experience in multicultural counselling. For the participants in this research, the personal and professional growth and learning they experienced was what made their Nunavut sojourn meaningful. They depicted themselves as changed by their sojourning experience, becoming more flexible and feeling more connected to other people and to the natural environment. They described learning how to learn a culture, learning about the Nunavut context and Inuit culture, and learning how to counsel across cultures. Many of the participants experienced personal spiritual growth during their sojourns and found that an understanding of the place of spirituality and religion in the lives of Inuit clients and communities assisted them with their counselling work. When the participants returned to southern Canada, they applied their learning to professional counselling practice, feeling it had benefited their work with clients from their own culture as well as clients from other cultures. The findings from this research suggest that sojourning is beneficial to the development of multicultural counselling competence, multicultural identity development, and spiritual development. Cross-cultural immersion experiences are therefore suggested for inclusion in multicultural counsellor education programs and for on-going professional development. Longitudinal research on sojourning counsellors and research with more intensive focus on themes arising in this study would extend our understanding of how sojourning contributes to the development of multicultural competence and identity.

References

Abbey, Hood, Young & Malcolmson (1990). New perspectives on mental health problems in Inuit women. *Proceedings of the 8th Annual International Congress on Circumpolar Health 90*, 285-287. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

American Psychological Association (2002). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved December 10, 2002 from http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.pdf

Arnakak, J. (2002). Incorporation of Inuit Qaujimituqangit, or Inuit traditional knowledge into the Government of Nunavut. *Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development*, 3, 33-39.

Arredondo, P. & Arciniega, G.M. (2001). Strategies and techniques for counsellor training based on the multicultural counseling competencies. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29*, 263-273.

Arredondo, P., Toporek, R., Brown, S.B., Jones, J., Locke, D.C., Sanchez, J. & Stadler, H. (1996). Operationalization of the multicultural counselling competencies. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 24*, 42-78.

Arthur, N. (2004). Culture shock in counselling. Paper presented at Canadian Counselling Association conference, Winnipeg, May 27, 2004.

Arthur, N. and Januszkowski, T. (2001). The multicultural counselling competencies of Canadian Counsellors. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 35(1),* 36-48.

Bennett, M.J. (1986). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R.M. Paige (Ed.), *Cross-cultural orientation: New* *conceptualizations and applications* (pp. 27-70). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Bennett, M.J. (2001). Developing intercultural competence for global leadership. In R. Reineke & C. Fussinger (Eds.) *Interkulturelles Management: Konzeption—Beratung—Training.* Germany: Gabler.

Berry, J.W. (2001). Psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 615-631.

Betensky, M. (2001). Phenomenological art therapy. In J.A. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to Art Therapy* (2nd ed., pp.121-133). Philadelphia: Brunner-Routledge.

Borg, D., Neckoway, R., & Delaney, R. (2002). Traditional values: Ojibway human service organizations. In K. Brownlee, R. Delaney & M. McKee (Eds.) *Social work with rural & rorthern organizations* (pp. 24-41). Thunder Bay, ON: Lakehead University.

Borg, D., Sportak, J., & Delaney, R. (2002). A context sensitive approach to mental illness: Towards a wellness model of helping. In K. Brownlee, R. Delaney & M. McKee (Eds.) Social Work with Rural & Northern Organizations (pp. 108-124). Thunder Bay, ON: Lakehead University.

Boyle, D.P., Nackerud, L. & Kilpatrick. A. (1999). The road less traveled: Cross-cultural, international experiential learning. *International Social Work, 42(2)*, 201-214.

Braud, W. & Anderson, R. (1998). *Transpersonal research methods for the social sciences.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brown, S.P., Parham, T.A. & Yonker, R. (1996). Influence of a cross-cultural training course on racial identity attitudes of White women and men: Preliminary perspectives. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 74*, 510-516.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Butler-Kisber, L. (1998). Representing qualitative data in poetic form. *Resources in Education, 33*, 427.

Campbell, Joseph (1968). *Hero with a thousand faces.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Canadian Psychological Association (2000). *Canadian code of ethics for psychologists* (3rd ed.). Retrieved Nov. 22, 2002 from http://www.cpa.ca/ethics2000.html

Canadian Psychological Association (2001). *Guidelines for non-discriminatory practice.* Retrieved Nov. 22, 2002 from http://www.cpa.ca/guide12.html

Carson, T. (1986). Closing the gap between research and practice: Conversation as a mode of doing research. *Phenomenology & Pedagogy, 4(2)*, 73-85.

Carson, T. & Johnston, I. (2000). The difficulty with difference in teacher education: Toward a pedagogy of compassion. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, XLVI*, 75-83.

Chung, R.C. & Bemak, F. (2002). Relationship of culture and empathy in cross-cultural counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 80*, 154-159.

Clandinin, D.J. & Connelly, M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

D'Andrea, M., Daniels, J. & Heck, R. (1991). Evaluating the impact of multicultural counseling training. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 70*, 143-150.

Diaz-Lazaro, C.M. & Cohen, B.B. (2001). Cross-cultural contact in counseling training. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29*, 41-56

Ellis, J.L. (1998). *Teaching from understanding: The teacher as interpretive inquirer.* New York: Garland.

Erikson, E. (1959). Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers (monograph0. *Psychological Issues, I(1).*

Erikson, E. (1982). The life cycle completed. New York: Norton.

Fischer, A.R. & Moradi, B. (2001). Racial and ethnic identity: Recent developments and needed directions. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counselling* (2nd ed., pp. 341-369). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fuertes, J.N., Bartolomeo, M., & Nichols, C.M. (2001). Future research directions in the study of counsellor multicultural competence. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29*, 3-12.

Fukuyama, M.A. & Sevig, T.D. (1997). Spiritual issues in counselling: A new course. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 36*, 233-245.

Fukuyama, M.A. & Sevig, T.D. (1999). *Integrating spirituality into multicultural counseling*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gopaul-McNicol, S. (1997). A theoretical framework for training monolingual school psychologists to work with multilingual/multicultural children: An exploration of major competencies. *Psychology in the Schools, 34*, 17-29.

Government of Nunavut (1999). *From the IQ presentation held at Apex, Abe Oopik Hall on September 29, 1999.* Unpublished internal document. Iqaluit: Department of Health and Social Services.

Government of Nunavut. (2000). *Bathurst mandate.* Retrieved January 2003 from http://www.gov.nu.ca/eng/bathurst.html

Government of Nunavut (2004). *Our land.* Retrieved June 04, 2004 from http://www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/English/about/ourland.pdf

Grof, S. (2000). *Psychology of the future*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N.K.Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hanna, F.J., Bemak, F., & Chung, R. (1999). Toward a new paradigm for multicultural counselling. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 77*, 125-134.

Harper, H. (2002). When the Big Snow melts: White women teaching in Canada's North. In C. Levine-Rasky (Ed.), *Working through Whiteness: International perspectives* (pp.269-288). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Harkham, R. (2003). *Defining and servicing mental health in a remote northern community.* Unpublished Master's thesis. School of Social Work and Family Studies, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

He, M.F. (1998). *Professional knowledge landscapes: Three Chinese women teachers' enculturation and acculturation processes in China and Canada*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

Helms, J. (1990). *Black and White racial identity: Theory, research and practice.* Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Helms, J.E. (1995). An update of Helm's White and people of color racial identity models. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counselling* (1st ed., pp. 181-198). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Herring, R. D. (1990). Nonverbal communication: A necessary component of cross-cultural counseling. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development, 18*, 172-180.

Herring, R. D. (1992). Seeking a new paradigm: Counseling native Americans. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development, 20,* 35-43.

Holcomb-McCoy, C.C. (2000). Multicultural counseling competencies: An exploratory factor analysis. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 28*, 83-97.

Jarvis, P. (1992). *Paradoxes of learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Josselson, R. & Lieblich, A. (Eds.). (1995). *Interpreting experience*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Josselson, R. (Ed.). (1996). *Ethics and process in the narrative study of lives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kim, B.S.K. & Lyons, H. Z. (2003). Experiential activities and multicultural counseling competence training. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 81*, 400-408.

Kim, Y.Y. (1997). Intercultural personhood: An integration of Eastern and Western perspectives. In L.A. Samovar & R.E. Porter (Eds.), *Intercultural Communication* (8th ed., pp. 434-447). Scarborough, ON: Wadsworth/Nelson.

Kim, Y.Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Korhonen, M. (2002). *InuitcClients and the effective helper: An investigation of culturally sensitive counselling*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Department of Psychology, Durham University. Durham, England.

Kvale, S. (1999). The psychoanalytic interview as qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 5,* 87-113.

Lafromboise, T., & Jackson, M. (1996). MCT theory and Native American populations. In D. W. Sue, A. E. Ivey, & P. Pederson (Eds.), *A theory of multicultural counseling and therapy* (pp. 192-202). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Lafromboise, T., Trimble, J. E., & Mohatt, G. V. (1990). Counseling interventions and American Indian tradition: An integrative approach. *The Counseling Psychologist, 18,* 628-654.

Lee, C.C. & Armstrong, K.L. (1995). Indigenous models of mental health intervention: Lessons from traditional healers. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counselling* (pp. 441-456). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Martin, J.N. (1997). Understanding whiteness in the United States. In L.A. Samovar & R.E. Porter (Eds.), *Intercultural communication* (8th ed., pp. 54-63). Scarborough, ON: Wadsworth/Nelson.

Matsumoto, D. (2000). Understanding and defining culture. In .D. Matusomoto (Ed.), *Culture and psychology: People around the world* (pp.17-52). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

McAdams, D.P., Diamond, A., de St. Aubin, E. & Mansfield, E. (1997). Stories of commitment: The psychosocial construction of generative lives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*, 678-694.

McAdams, D. P., Hart, H. M., & Maruna, S. (1998). The anatomy of generativity. In D. P. McAdams and E. de St. Aubin, (Eds). *Generativity and adult development: How and why we care for the next generation*. (pp. 7-43). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association; Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Inc.

McAllister, G. & Irvine, J.J. (2000). Cross cultural competency and multicultural teacher education. *Review of Educational Research, 70*, 3-24.

McIntosh, P. (1995). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondence through work in Women's Studies. In M.L.Anderson and P.H.Collins (Eds.), *Race, class and gender* (pp. 76-86). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Mishler, E.G. (1986). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Morrow, S.L., Rakhsha, G. & Castaneda, C.L. (2001). Qualitative research methods for multicultural counseling. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counselling* (2nd ed., pp.575-603). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Moustakas, C. E. (1961). *Loneliness*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Murray, B. (2002). Psychology takes a tenuous hold in Pakistan. *Monitor on Psychology, 33,* 45-47.

Neville, H.A., Heppner, M.J., Louie, C.E., Thompson, C.E., Brooks, L. & Baker. C.E. (1996). The impact of multicultural training on White racial identity attitudes and therapy competencies. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 27*, 83-89.

Norris, J. (1995). The use of drama in teacher education: A call for embodied learning. In B. Warren (Ed.), *Creating a theatre in your classroom* (pp. 279-305). North York, Ontario: Captus University Publications.

Osland, J.S. (1995). *The adventure of working abroad: Hero tales from the global frontier*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ottavi, T.M., Pope-Davis, D.B., & Dings, J.G. (1994). Relationship between White racial identity attitudes and self-reported multicultural counselling competencies. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41*, 149-154.

Parker, W.M.; Moore, M.A. & Neimeyer, G.J. (1998). Altering White racial identity and interracial comfort through multicultural training. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 76(3)*, 302-311.

Paskievich, J. (Director) (1992). *Sedna: The making of a myth.* Ottawa: National Film Board.

Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pedersen, P.B. (1998). *Culture-centered counselling interventions: Striving for accuracy.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pedersen, P.B. (2000). *Handbook for developing multicultural awareness* (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Pedersen, P.B. (2001). Multiculturalism and the paradigm shift in counselling: Controversies and alternative futures. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 35(1),* 13-25.

Polkinghorne, D.E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. In J.A. Hatch & R. Wisniewski (Eds.), *Life history and narrative* (pp.5 -23). Washington, DC: Falmer Press.

Ponterotto, J.G., Alexander, C.M. & Grieger, I. (1995). A multicultural competency checklist for counseling training programs. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 23,* 11- 20.

Ponterotto, J.G., Casas, J.M., Suzuki, L.A., & Alexander, C.M. (Eds.). (2001). *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ponterotto, J.G., Gretchen, D., Utsey, S.O., Rieger, B. & Austin, R. (2002). A revision of the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 30*, 153-180.

Ponterotto, J.G., Jackson, M.A., & Nutini, C.D. (2001). Reflections on the life stories of pioneers in multicultural counseling. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander (Eds.) *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (2nd ed., pp. 138-162). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Salzman, M. (2000). Promoting multicultural competence: A cross-cultural mentorship project. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 28*, 119-124.

Schild-Jones, L. (1999). *The transcultural process: creative expression in a chaotic world.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Fielding Institute, Santa Barbara, CA.

Schwandt, T.A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Serkoak, D. (2003). *Inuit music.* Retrieved July 28, 2003 from http://www.arctictravel.com/chapters/inmusicpage.html.

Sevig, T. & Etzkorn, J. (2001). Transformative training: A year-long multicultural counseling seminar for graduate students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development, 29*, 57-73.

Smith, D.B. & Morrisette, P.J. (2001). The experiences of White male counsellors who work with First Nations clients. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 35(1)*, 74-88.

Smith, D.G. (1995). Journeying: A meditation on leaving home and coming home. *Salt, 16(1)*, 10-12.

Smith, D.G. (2002a). *The mission of the hermeneutic scholar*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Smith, J.K. (1993). Hermeneutics and qualitative inquiry. In D.J. Flinders and G.E. Mills (Eds.) *Theory and concepts in qualitative research: Perspectives from the field* (pp. 183-200). New York: Teachers College Press.

Stake, R.E. (1995). The art of case study research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Statistics Canada (2002). *A profile of the Canadian population: Where we live*. Retrieved February, 2002 from http://geodepot.statcan.ca/Diss/Highlights/Highlights_e.cfm.

Statistics Canada (2003). *2001 Census - Release 5*. Retrieved July 6, 2004 from http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/release/release5.cfm.

Statistics Canada (2004). *Aboriginal people of Canada*. Retrieved July 6, 2004 from http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/analytic/companion/abor/canada.cfm.

Sue, D.W., Arredondo, P., & McDavis, R.J. (1992). Multicultural counseling competencies and standards: A call to the profession. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 70*, 477-486.

Sue, D.W. & Sue. D. (2003). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice* (4th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Swinton, J. (2001). *Spirituality and mental health care*. London: Jennifer Kingsley.

Toporek, R.L. & Reza, J.V. (2001). Context as a critical dimension of multicultural counseling: Articulating personal, professional and institutional competence. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29*, 13-30.

Vaughan, F. (1985). Discovering transpersonal identity. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 25,* 13-38.

Vinson, T.S. & Neimeyer, G.J. (2000). The relationship between racial identity development and multicultural counseling competence. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 28*, 177-192.

Wenzel, G. (1991). *Animal right, human rights: Ecology, economy and ideology in the Canadian Arctic.* Toronto: U of T Press

Warwick-Bibby, M. (1993). *Teachers' perspectives of giftedness among students who are deaf or hard of hearing.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Department of Educational Psychology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

Wihak, C. (2004). The meaning of being White in Canada. *TESL Canada, 21*, 110-115.

Wihak, C. & Merali, F. (2003). Culturally sensitive counselling in Nunavut: Implications of Inuit traditional knowledge. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 37*, 243-255.

Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral psychology.* Boston: Shambala.

Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method.* Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Wiseman, H. (1995). The quest for connectedness: Loneliness as process in the narratives of lonely university students. In R. Josselson & A. Lieblich (Eds.), *Interpreting experience: The narrative study of lives* (pp 116-152). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Appendices

Appendix A Participant Information Letter and Informed Consent Form

Information Letter to Participants

Counsellors' Sojourning Experience in Nunavut.

My name is Christine Wihak and I am a Ph.D. student in Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta. My doctoral research involves the experience of counsellors who have lived and worked in Nunavut, as I myself have done. That is why I think it is so important to understand the perspectives of other counsellors who have had this experience. I am inviting you to be a participant in this research because I or someone you know thought you might enjoy sharing your experiences in Nunavut.

This research topic is significant for the counselling field. With the growing diversity in the Canadian population, professional counsellors need to be able to work effectively with clients from many different cultures. Having the cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills to do this is called "multicultural competence". While professional associations such as the Canadian Psychological Association and the Canadian Counselling Association recognize the importance of multicultural competence, counsellor educators at present have little information on how to develop this quality through professional education. In the research literature, increased multicultural competence has been linked with cross-cultural contact. Little research exists, however, concerning the experience of counsellors who have lived and worked for a time with a culture different than their own; this type of cross-cultural experience is called "sojourning". This research study is a narrative inquiry into the experience of counsellors who have sojourned in Nunavut for at least two years and been back in southern Canada for at least one year. By listening to the experiences of counsellors who have sojourned, much can be learned to guide the cultivation of multicultural competence through professional education and/or development activities.

If you are interested in participating in this study, I will contact you for an in-person interview lasting approximately 1.5 hours. Before beginning the interview, I will ask you to complete a written Consent Form (attached) after we have reviewed it together. Even after you have signed the Consent Form, you will be free to withdraw from the study at anytime by contacting either myself or one of my supervisors: Dr. Noorfarah Merali, Assistant Professor of Counselling Psychology, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta at (780) 492-1158 or Dr. MaryAnn Bibby, Professor of Deafness Studies, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta at (780) 492 369.

I will ask you to choose a false name for use during this study, unless you prefer to use your real name. During the interview, I will ask you to answer questions about your own background, your experiences in Nunavut, and your work with culturally diverse clients both in Nunavut and after you returned to southern Canada. In addition, I will ask you to do a simple drawing exercise to reflect on how you saw yourself before you went to Nunavut and how you see yourself now.

I will be making video- and audiotapes of our interviews. Only I will see the videotapes. The audiotapes will be used to make written transcriptions of our interview. I plan to transcribe the tapes myself, but in the event that this is not possible, I may need to hire a transcriber to do this. The transcriber will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and abide by University of Alberta regulations concerning confidentiality. Everything you say will be kept private and confidential because I will replace your name (from the Informed Consent form) with the false name you have chosen unless understanding the possible risks, you prefer me to use your real name.

During and after the research, I will keep all your personal information, interview tapes, and transcripts locked securely in my home. The information linking your false name to your real name will be kept separately. After keeping the information for the five years required by the University of Alberta, I will destroy it.

Once your interview has been transcribed, I will ask you to review the printed transcript and correct and/or comment on it during an audiotaped phone interview; this will take approximately one hour. Then, I will put information from all the research participants together in a written document that explores their sojourning experiences and their understanding of culture. I will disguise your biographical details in the written document to protect your privacy and to try to ensure that your information will not be recognizable. Again, I will ask you to review the written document and identify any information you would prefer to delete during an audiotaped phone interview; this will take approximately one hour.

In future, the information may be presented at a conference, published in a journal article or used for teaching to help other counsellors develop multicultural competence.

If you are interested in participating in this study or want more information, you can contact me at 1-780-951-6780 or send e-mail to cwihak@nucleus.com.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Board of the Faculties of Education and Extension at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at (780) 492-3751.

Informed Consent Form

I have read and discussed with Christine the information letter concerning the study of counsellors' sojourning experience in Nunavut.

Please circle one **YES** **NO**

I agree to participate in the study, understanding that it will involve an in-person interview of approximately 1.5 hours that will be video- and audiotaped, and follow-up phone interviews of approximately 1 hour each to review the interview transcripts and the research report.

Please circle one **YES** **NO**

I wish to remain anonymous in the research.

Please circle one **YES** **NO**

I wish that my real first name and relevant biographical information be used in the research. I understand the risks involved in using my real first name.

Please circle one **YES** **NO**

I give permission for the research to be used beyond the dissertation project in presentations, papers in academic journals and/or teaching materials for counsellor training. If I decide to use my own name, I understand that Christine may at a future date ask for my written permission to use a video clip in a conference presentation or for counsellor training.

Please circle one **YES** **NO**

Signature: ________________________________

Date________________ Researcher's Signature______________________________

Name:____ Pseudonym: __________

Appendix B Open-ended questions

How did you feel about living and working in Nunavut?

What was your experience with this culture?

In moving to a new place, many events can make you aware that it is different than what you are used to. Tell me about a particular experience you had that highlighted how your experience in Nunavut was different than your previous experience.

What ways did you typically use to understand or process new experiences in Nunavut as they were happening?

What helped you most with living and working in Nunavut?

What were some of the important things you learned or insights you gained through your experience in Nunavut? What made your experience in Nunavut meaningful for you?

When you left Nunavut, what was your experience of coming back to southern Canada like?

How have you brought what you learned in Nunavut into your life and work now?

What is important for me to understand about your story? What other questions do you want me to ask? What have I left out?